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and who had performed many sacrifices.⁷ Unto the lizard that said those words, Mādhava spoke,—Thou hadst done many righteous acts. No sin didst thou commit. Why then, O king, hast thou attained to such a distressful end? Do thou explain what is this and why has it been brought about?⁸ We have heard that thou didst repeatedly make gifts unto the Brāhmanas of hundreds upon hundreds of thousands and once again eight times hundreds upon hundreds of ten thousands of kine.* Why, therefore, has this end overtaken thee?⁹—Nriga then replied unto Krishna, saying,—On one occasion a cow belonging to a Brāhmana who regularly worshipped his domestic fire, escaping from the owner's abode while he was absent from home entered my flock.¹⁰ The keepers of my cattle included that cow in their tale of a thousand. In time that cow was given away by me unto a Brāhmana, acting as I did from desire of happiness in heaven.¹¹ The true owner, returning home, sought for his lost cow and at last saw it in the house of another. Finding her, the owner said,—This cow is mine!¹²—The other person contested his claim, till both, disputing and excited with wrath, came to me. Addressing me, one of them said,—Thou hast been the giver of this cow!—The other one said,—Thou hast robbed me of this cow because she is mine!¹³—I then solicited the Brāhmana unto whom I had given that cow, to return the gift in exchange for hundreds upon hundreds of other kine. Without acceding to my earnest solicitations, he addressed me, saying,¹⁴—The cow I have got is well-suited to time and place. She yields a copious measure of milk, besides being very quiet and very fond of us. The milk she yields is very sweet. She is regarded as worthy of every praise in my house.¹⁵ She is nourishing, besides, a weak child of mine that has just been weaned. She is incapable of being given up by me!—Having said these words, the Brāhmana went away.¹⁶ I then solicited the other Brāhmana offering him an exchange, and saying,—Do thou take a hundred thousand kine for this one cow!¹⁷—The Brāhmana, however, replied unto me, saying,—

* No particular number is intended. What is meant is—innumerable.—T.

I do not accept gifts from persons of the kingly order. I am able to get on without help. Do thou then, without loss of time, give me that very cow which was mine!—Even thus, O slayer of Madhu, did that Brāhmana speak unto me.¹⁸ I offered to make gifts unto him of gold and silver and horses and cars. That foremost of Brāhmanas refused to accept any of these in gift and went away.¹⁹ Meanwhile, urged by Time's irresistible influence, I had to depart from this world. Wending to the region of the Pitris I was taken to the presence of the king of the dead.²⁰ Worshipping me duly, Yama addressed me, saying,—The end cannot be ascertained, O king, of thy righteous deeds.²¹ There is, however, a little sin which was unconsciously perpetrated by thee. Do thou suffer the punishment for that sin now or afterwards as it pleases thee!²² Thou hadst (upon thy accession to the throne) sworn that thou wouldst protect (all persons in the enjoyment of their own). That oath of thine was not rigidly kept by thee. That tookest also what belonged to a Brāhmana. Even this has been the twofold sin thou hast committed!²³—I answered, saying,—I shall first undergo the distress of punishment, and when that is over, I shall enjoy the happiness that is in store for me, O lord!—After I had said those words unto the king of the dead, I fell down on the Earth.²⁴ Though fallen down I still could hear the words that Yama said unto me very loudly. Those words were,—Janārdhana the son of Vasudeva will rescue thee!²⁵ Upon the completion of a full thousand years, when the demerit will be exhausted of thy sinful act, thou shalt then attain to many regions of inexhaustible felicity that have been acquired by thee through thy own acts of righteousness!²⁶—Falling down I found myself, with head downwards, within this well, transformed into a creature of the intermediate order. Memory, however, did not leave me.²⁷ By thee I have been rescued today. What else can it testify than the puissance of thy penances? Let me have thy permission, O Krishna! I desire to ascend to Heaven!²⁸—Permitted then by Krishna, king Nriga bowed his head unto him and then mounted a celestial car and proceeded to Heaven.²⁹ After Nriga had thus proceeded to Heaven, O best of the Bharatas,

Vāsudeva recited this Verse, O delighter of the Kurus.³⁰ No one should consciously appropriate anything belonging to a Brāhmana. The property of a Brāhmana, if taken, destroys the taker even as the Brāhmana's cow destroyed king Nriga!³¹—I tell thee, again, O Pārtha, that a meeting with the good never proves fruitless. Behold, king Nriga was rescued from Hell through a meeting of his with one that is good.³² As a gift is productive of merit, even so an act of spoliation leads to demerit. Hence, also, O Yudhishtira, one should avoid doing any injury to kine.'"³³

SECTION LXXI.

"Yudhishtira said,—‘O sinless one, do thou discourse to me more in detail upon the merits that are attainable by making gifts of kine. O thou of mighty arms, I am never satiated with thy words!’¹

"Bhishma said,—‘In this connection is recited the old history of the discourse between the Rishi Uddālaki and him called Nāchiketa.² Once on a time the Rishi Uddālaki endued with great intelligence, approaching his son Nāchiketa, said unto him,—Do thou wait upon and serve me!³—Upon the completion of the vow he had observed, the great Rishi once more said unto his son,—Engaged in performing my ablutions and deeply taken up with my Vedic study,⁴ I have forgotten to bring with me the fire-wood, the Kuça blades, the flowers, the water-jar, and the potherbs I had gathered. Do thou bring me those things from the river-shore.⁵—The son proceeded to the spot indicated, but saw that all the articles had been washed away by the current. Coming back to his father, he said—I do not see the things!⁶—Afflicted as he then was by hunger, thirst, and fatigue, the Rishi Uddālaki of high ascetic merit, in a sudden wrath, cursed his son, saying,—Do thou meet with Yama today!⁷—Thus struck by his sire with the thunder of his speech, the son, with joined

The ‘hence’ in the last line has reference to what has been said on the subject of kine, and not to the first line of the Verse.—T,

hands, said,—Be gratified with me !—Soon, however, he fell down on the earth, deprived of life.⁸ Beholding Nāchiketa prostrated upon the earth, his sire became deprived of his senses through grief. He too, exclaiming,—Alas, what have I done !—fell down on the earth.⁹ Filled with grief as he indulged in lamentations for his son, the rest of that day passed away and night came.¹⁰ Then Nāchiketa, O son of Kuru's race, drenched by the tears of his father, gave signs of returning life as he lay on a mat of Kuça grass. His restoration to life under the tears of his sire resembled the sprouting forth of seeds when drenched with auspicious showers.¹¹ The son just restored to consciousness was still weak. His body was smeared with fragrant unguents and he looked like one just awaking from a deep slumber. The Rishi asked him, saying,¹²—Hast thou, O son, acquired auspicious regions by thy own acts ? By good luck, thou hast been restored to me ! Thy body does not seem to be human !¹³—Thus asked by his high-souled father, Nāchiketa who had seen every thing with his own eyes, made the following answer unto him in the midst of the Rishis.¹⁴—In obedience to thy command I proceeded to the extensive region of Yama which is possessed of a delightful effulgence. There I beheld a palatial mansion which extended for thousands of Yojanas and emitted a golden splendour from every part.¹⁵ As soon as Yama beheld me approaching with face towards him, he commanded his attendants, saying,—Give him a good seat.—Verily, the king of the dead, for thy sake worshipped me with the Arghya and the other ingredients.¹⁶ Thus worshipped by Yama and seated in the midst of his counsellors, I then asked him mildly,—I have come to thy abode, O judge of the dead ! Do thou assign me those regions which I deserve for my acts !¹⁷—Yama then answered me, saying,—Thou art not dead, O amiable one ! Endued with penances, thy father said unto thee—Do thou meet with Yama !—The energy of thy sire is like that of a blazing fire. I could not possibly falsify that speech of his.¹⁸ Thou hast seen me. Do thou go hence, O child ! The author of thy body is indulging in lamentations for thee. Thou art my dear guest. What wish of thine cherished by thee in thy heart shall I grant thee ? Solicit the fruition

of whatever desire thou mayst cherish!¹⁹—Thus addressed by him, I replied unto the king of the dead, saying,—I have arrived within thy dominions from which no traveller ever returns. If I really be an object deserving of thy attentions, I desire, O king of the dead, to have a sight of those regions of high prosperity and happiness that have been reserved for doers of righteous deeds!²⁰—Thus addressed by me, Yama caused me to be mounted upon a vehicle of splendour as effulgent as that of the Sun and unto which were harnessed many excellent steeds. Bearing me on that vehicle, he showed me, O foremost of regenerate persons, all those delightful regions that are reserved for the righteous.²¹ I beheld in those regions many mansions of great rasplendence intended for high-souled persons. Those mansions are of diverse forms and are adorned with every kind of gems.²² Bright as the disc of the Moon, they are ornamented with rows of tinkling bells. Hundreds among them are of many stories. Within them are pleasant groves and woods, and transparent pieces of water.²³ Possessed of the effulgence of *lapis lazuli* and the Sun, and made of silver and gold, their complexion resembles that of the morning Sun. Some of them are immovable and some movable.²⁴ Within them are many hills of viands and enjoyable articles, and robes and beds in abundance. Within them are many trees capable of granting the fruition of every wish.²⁵ There are also many rivers and roads and spacious halls and lakes and large tanks. Thousands of cars with rattling wheels may be seen there, having excellent steeds harnessed unto them.²⁶ Many rivers that run milk, many hills of ghee, and large pieces of transparent water occur there. Verily, I beheld many such regions, never seen by me before, of happiness and joy, approved by the king of the dead.²⁷ Beholding all those objects, I addressed the ancient and puissant judge of the dead, saying,—For whose use and enjoyment have these rivers with eternal currents of milk and ghee been ordained?²⁸—Yama answered me, saying,—These streams of vaccine milk and ghee, know thou, are for the enjoyment of those righteous persons that make gifts in the world of men. Other eternal worlds there are which are filled with such mansions free from

sorrow of every kind. These are reserved for those persons that are engaged in making gifts of kine.*²⁹ The mere gift of kine is not worthy of praise. There are considerations of propriety or otherwise about the person unto whom kine should be given, the time for making those gifts, the kind of kine that should form the subject of gifts, and the rites that should be observed in making the gifts. Gifts of kine should be made after ascertaining the distinctive qualifications of both Brāhmanas (who are to receive them) and the kine themselves (which are to be given away). Kine should not be given unto one in whose abode they are likely to suffer from fire or the sun.³⁰ That Brāhmana who is possessed of Vedic lore, who is of austere penances, and who performs sacrifices, is regarded as worthy of receiving kine in gift. Those kine that have been rescued from distressful situations, or that have been given by poor householders from want of sufficient means to feed and cherish them, are, for these reasons, reckoned as of high value.†³¹ Abstaining from all food and living upon water alone for three nights and sleeping the while on the bare earth, one should, having properly fed the kine one intends to give away, give them unto Brāhmanas after having gratified them also (with other gifts).³² The kine given away should be accompanied by their calves. They should, again, be such as to bring forth good calves at the proper seasons. They should be accompanied with other articles when so given away. Having completed the gift, the giver should live for three days on only vaccine secretions and forbearing from food of every other kind.³³ He who gives a cow that is not vicious, that brings forth good calves at proper intervals, and that does not fly away from the owner's house, and accompanies such gift with a vessel of white brass for milking her, enjoys the felicity of Heaven for as many years

* 'Vitaṣṭkaiḥ' in the instrumental plural refers to "Bhavanaiḥ" or some such substantive understood. It may also be read as a nominative plural, referring to 'Lokāḥ.'—T.

† Very probably what is said here is that only such kine are worthy of being given away unto Brāhmanas, and not lean animals bought for gift.—T.

as are measured by the number of hairs on the animal's body. He who gives a bull unto a Brāhmana, that is well-broken and capable of bearing burthens, possessed of strength and young in years, disinclined to do any mischief, large-sized and endued with energy, enjoys those regions, approved of the righteous, that are reserved for givers of kine.³⁴ He is regarded as a proper person for receiving a cow in gift who is known to be mild towards kine, who takes kine for his refuge, who is grateful, and who has no means of subsistence assigned unto him. When an old man becomes ill, or when a famine occurs, or when a Brāhmana intends to perform a sacrifice, or when one wishes to till for agriculture, or when one gets a son through the efficacy of a Homa performed for the purpose,³⁵ or for the use of one's preceptor, or for the sustenance of a child (born in the usual way), one should give away a loved cow. Even these are the considerations that are applauded (in the matter of making gifts of kine) in respect of place and time. The kine that deserve to be given away are those that yield copious measures of milk, or those that are well known (for their docility and other virtues), or those that have been purchased for a price, or those that have been acquired as honoraria for learning, or those that have been obtained in exchange by offering other living creatures (such as sheep and goats, &c.,) or those that have been won by prowess of arms, or those that have been got as marriage-dower (from fathers-in-law and other relations of the wife).—³⁶

“Nāchiketa continued,—Hearing these words of Vaivatsva, I once more addressed him, saying,—What are those objects by giving which, when kine are not procurable, givers may yet go to regions reserved for men making gifts of kine?³⁷ —Questioned by me, the wise Yama answered, explaining further what the end is that is attainable by making gifts of kine. He said,—In the absence of kine, a person by making gifts of what has been regarded as the substitute of kine, wins the merit of making gifts of kine.³⁸ If in the absence of kine, one makes a gift of a cow made of ghee, observant of a vow the while, one gets for one's use these rivers of ghee all of which approach one like an affectionate mother approaching her loved

child.³⁹ If, in the absence of even a cow made of ghee, one makes a gift of a cow made of sesame seeds, observing a vow the while, one succeeds with the assistance of that cow to transgress all calamities in this world and to enjoy great happiness hereafter from these rivers of milk that thou beholdest!⁴⁰ If, in the absence of a cow made of sesame seeds, one makes a gift of a cow made of water, one succeeds in coming to these happy regions and enjoying this river of cool and transparent water that is, besides, capable of granting the fruition of every wish.⁴¹—The king of the dead explained to me all this while I was his guest, and, O thou of unfading glory, great was the joy that I felt at sight of all the wonders he showed me.⁴² I shall now tell thee what would certainly be agreeable to thee. I have now got a great sacrifice whose performance does not require much wealth. That sacrifice (constituted by gifts of kine) may be said to flow from me, O sire ! Others will obtain it also. It is not inconsistent with the ordinances of the Vedas.⁴³ The curse that thou hadst denounced upon me was no curse but was in reality a blessing, since it enabled me to have a sight of the great king of the dead. There I have beheld what the rewards are that attach to gifts. I shall henceforth, O thou of great soul, practise the duty of gift without any doubt lurking in my mind respecting its rewards.⁴⁴ And, O great Rishi, the righteous Yama, filled with joy, repeatedly told me,—One who, by making frequent gifts, has succeeded in acquiring purity of mind should then make gifts of kine in especial.⁴⁵ This topic (about gifts) is fraught with sanctity. Do thou never disregard the duties in respect of gifts. Gifts, again, should be made unto deserving persons, when time and place are suitable. Do thou, therefore, always make gifts of kine. Never entertain any doubt in this respect.⁴⁶ Devoted to the path of gifts, many high-souled persons in days of yore used to make gifts of kine. Fearing to practise austere penances, they made gifts according to the extent of their power.⁴⁷ In time they cast off all sentiments of pride and vanity, and purified their souls. Engaged in performing Crāddhas in honor of the Pitris and in all acts of righteousness, they used to make, according to the extent of their power, gifts of kine, and as the reward of those

acts they have attained to Heaven and are shining in effulgence for such righteousness.⁴⁸ One should, on the eighth day of the moon that is known by the name of Kāmyāṣṭami, make gifts of kine, properly won, unto the Brāhmanas, after ascertaining the eligibility of the recipients (by the ordinances already laid down). After making the gift, one should then subsist for ten days together upon only the milk of kine, their dung and their urine, (abstaining from all other food the while).⁴⁹ The merit that one acquires by making a gift of a bull is equal to that which attaches to the divine vow. By making a gift of a couple of kine one acquires, as the reward thereof, a mastery of the Vedas. By making a gift of cars and vehicles with kine yoked thereto, one acquires the merit of baths in sacred waters. By making a gift of a cow of the Kapilā species, one becomes cleansed of all one's sins.⁵⁰ Verily, by giving away even a single cow of the Kapilā species that has been acquired by legitimate means, one becomes cleansed of all the sins one may have committed. There is nothing higher (in point of taste) than the milk which is yielded by kine. The gift of a cow is truly regarded as a very superior gift.⁵¹ Kine, by yielding milk, rescue all the worlds from calamity. It is kine, again, that produce the food upon which creatures subsist. One who, knowing the extent of the service that kine do, does not entertain in one's heart affection for kine, is a sinner that is certain to sink in Hell.⁵² If one gives a thousand or a hundred or ten or five kine, verily, if one gives unto a righteous Brāhmaṇa even a single cow which brings forth good calves at proper intervals, one is sure to see that cow approach one in Heaven in the form of a river of sacred water capable of granting the fruition of every wish.⁵³ In respect of the prosperity and the growth that kine confer, in the matter also of the protection that kine grant unto all creatures of the Earth, kine are equal to the very rays of the Sun

* Kine produce food not only by assisting at tillage of the soil, but also by aiding in the performance of sacrifices. The ghee burnt in the sacrificial fire sustains the deities, who pour rain and cause crops to grow.—T.

that fall on the Earth.* The word that signifies the cow stands also for the rays of the Sun. The giver of a cow becomes the progenitor of a very large race that extends over a large part of the Earth. Hence, he that gives a cow shines like a second Sun in resplendence.⁵⁴ The disciple should, in the matter of making gifts of kine, select his preceptor. Such a disciple is sure to go to Heaven everytime. The selection of a preceptor (in the matter of the performance of righteous deeds) is regarded as a high duty by persons conversant with the ordinances. This is, indeed, the initial ordinance. All other ordinances (respecting the gift of kine) depend upon it.[†]⁵⁵ Selecting, after examination, an eligible person among the Brāhmanas, one should make unto him the gift of a cow that has been acquired by legitimate means, and having made the gift cause him to accept it. The deities and men and ourselves also, in wishing good to others, say,—Let the merits attaching to gifts be thine in consequence of thy righteousness?⁵⁶—Even thus did the judge of the dead speak unto me, O regenerate Rishi. I then bowed my head unto the righteous Yama. Obtaining his permission I left his dominions and have now come to the sole of thy feet.—’ ”⁵⁷

SECTION LXXII.

Yudhishtira said,—‘Thou hast, O grandsire, discoursed to me on the topic of gifts of kine in speaking of the Rishi Nāchiketa. Thou hast also, impliedly discoursed, O puissant one, on the efficacy and pre-eminence of that act.¹ Thou hast also told me, O grandsire of great intelligence, of the exceed-

* That heat is the originating principle of the growth of many things was well understood by the Rishis.—T.

† The sense seems to be this : in doing all righteous acts, one should first take the aid of a preceptor, even if one be well conversant with the ordinances one has to follow. Without the selection of a preceptor in the first place, there can be no righteous act. In the matter, therefore, of making gifts of kine according to the ordinances laid down, one should seek the help of a preceptor as well as in the matter of every other act of righteousness.—T.

ingly afflicting character of the calamity that overtook the high-souled king Nriga in consequence of a single fault of his.² He had to dwell for a long time at Dwārāvati (in the form of a mighty lizard) and how Krishna became the cause of his rescue from that miserable plight.³ I have, however, one doubt. It is on the subject of the regions of kine. I desire to hear, in detail about those regions which are reserved for the residence of persons that make gifts of kine.⁴

“Bhishma said,—‘In this connection is recited the old narrative of the discourse between Him who sprang from the primeval lotus and him who performed a hundred sacrifices.’⁵

“‘Cakra said,—I see, O Grandsire, that those who are residents of the region of kine transcend by their resplendence the prosperity of the denizens of Heaven and pass them by (as beings of an inferior station) ! This has raised a doubt in my mind.⁶ Of what kind, O holy one, are the regions of kine ? Tell me all about them, O sinless one ! Verily, what is the nature of those regions that are inhabited by givers of kine ? I wish to know this !⁷ Of what kind are those regions ? What fruits do they bring ? What is the highest object there which the denizens thereof succeed in winning ? What are its virtues ? How also do men, freed from every kind of anxiety, succeed in going to those regions ?⁸ For what period does the giver of a cow enjoy the fruits that are borne by his gift ? How may persons make gifts of many kine and how may they make gifts of a few kine ?⁹ What are the merits attaching to gifts of many kine and what those that attach to gifts of a few only ? How also do persons become givers of kine without giving any kine in reality ? Do thou tell me all this !¹⁰ How does one making gifts of even many kine, O puissant lord, become the equal of one that has made gifts of only a few kine ? How also does one who makes gifts of only a few kine succeed in becoming the equal of one who has made gifts of many kine ?¹¹ What kind of Dakshinā is regarded as distinguished for pre-eminence in the matter of gifts of kine ? It behooveth thee, O holy one, to discourse unto me on all this agreeably to truth ! ”—¹²

SECTION LXXIII.

“The Grandsire said,—The questions thou hast asked me in respect of kine, beginning with their gift, are such that there is none else in the three worlds, O thou of a hundred sacrifices, who could put them !¹ There are many kinds of regions, O Cakra, which are invisible to even thee. Those regions are seen by me, O Indra, as also by those women that are chaste and that have been attached to only one husband.² Rishis observant of excellent vows, by means of their deeds of righteousness and piety, and Brāhmanas of righteous souls, succeed in repairing to them in even their fleshly forms.³ Men that are observant of excellent vows behold those regions which resemble the bright creations of dreams, aided by their cleansed minds and by that (temporary) emancipation which succeeds the loss of one’s consciousness of body.*⁴ Listen, O thou of a thousand eyes, to me as I tell thee what the attributes are with which those regions are endued. There the very course of Time is suspended. Decrepitude is not there, nor Fire which is omnipresent in the universe. There the slightest evil does not occur, nor disease, nor weakness of any kind.⁵ The kine that live there, O Vāsava, obtain the fruition of every desire which they cherish in their hearts. I have direct experience of what I say unto thee.⁶ Capable of going everywhere at will and actually repairing from place to place with ease, they enjoy the fruition of wish after wish as it arises in their minds. Lakes and tanks and rivers and forests of diverse kinds, and mansions and hills and all kinds of delightful objects,—delightful, that is, to all creatures,—are to be seen there. There is no region of felicity that is superior to any of these of which I speak.⁷⁻⁸ All those formost of men, O Cakra, who are forgiving unto all creatures, who endure everything, who are full of affection for all things, who render dutiful obedience unto their

* When consciousness of body is lost in Yoga or Samādhi, a temporary Moksha or Emancipation succeeds. Men with cleansed minds behold at such times those regions of supreme felicity to which the speaker refers. Such felicity, of course, is the felicity of Brahma itself.—T.

preceptors, and who are freed from pride and vanity, repair to those regions of supreme felicity.⁹ He who abstains from every kind of flesh, who is possessed of a cleansed heart, who is endued with righteousness, who worships his parents with reverence, who is endued with truthfulness of speech and conduct, who attends with obedience upon the Brāhmanas, who is faultless in conduct,¹⁰ who never behaves with anger towards kine and towards the Brāhmanas, who is devoted to the accomplishment of every duty, who serves his preceptors with reverence, who is devoted for his whole life to truth and to gifts, and who is always forgiving towards all transgressions against himself,¹¹ who is mild and self-restrained, who is full of reverence for the deities, who is hospitable to all guests, who is endued with compassion,—verily, he who is adorned with these attributes,—succeeds in attaining to the eternal and immutable region of kine.¹² He who is stained with adultery, sees not such a region; nor he who is a slayer of his preceptor; nor he who speaks falsely or indulges in idle boasts; nor he who always disputes with others; nor he who behaves with hostility towards the Brāhmanas. Indeed, that wicked wight who is stained with such faults fails to attain even a sight of these regions of felicity;¹³ nor he that injures his friends; nor he that is full of guile; nor he that is ungrateful; nor he that is a cheat; nor he that is crooked in conduct; nor he that is a disregarder of religion; nor he that is a slayer of Brāhmanas. Such men are incapable of beholding in even imagination the region of kine that is the abode of only those who are righteous of deeds.¹⁴ I have told thee everything about the region of kine in minute detail, O chief of the deities! Hear now, O thou of a hundred sacrifices, the merit that is theirs who are engaged in making gifts of kine.¹⁵ He who makes gifts of kine, after purchasing them with wealth obtained by inheritance or acquired lawfully by him, attains, as the fruit of such an act, to many regions of inexhaustible felicity.¹⁶ He who makes a gift of a cow, having acquired it with wealth won at dice, enjoys felicity, O Cakra, for ten thousand years of celestial measure.¹⁷ He who acquires a cow as his share of ancestral wealth is said to acquire her legitimately. Such a cow may be given away. They that

make gifts of kine so acquired obtain many eternal regions of felicity that is inexhaustible.¹⁸ That person who having acquired a cow in gift makes a gift of her with a pure heart, succeeds without doubt, O lord of Cachi, in obtaining eternal regions of beatitude.¹⁹ That person who with restrained senses speaks the truth from his birth (to the time of his death) and who endures everything at the hands of his preceptor and of the Brāhmanas, and who practices forgiveness, succeeds in attaining to an end that is equal to that of kine.²⁰ That speech which is improper, O lord of Cachi, should never be addressed to a Brāhmana. One, again, should not, in even one's mind, do an injury to a cow. One should, in one's conduct, imitate the cow, and show compassion towards the cow.*²¹ Hear, O Cakra, what the fruits are that become his who is devoted to the duty of truth. If such a person gives away a single cow, that one cow becomes equal to a thousand kine.²² If a Kshatriya, possessed of such qualifications, makes a gift of a single cow, his merit becomes equal to that of a Brāhmana's. That single cow, listen, O Cakra, which such a Kshatriya gives away becomes the source of as much merit as the single cow that a Brāhmana gives away under similar circumstances. Even this is the certain conclusion of the scriptures.²³ If a Vaiçya, possessed of similar accomplishments, were to make a gift of a single cow, that cow would be equal to five hundred kine (in respect of the merit she would produce). If a Cudra endued with humility were to make a gift of a cow, such cow would be equal to a hundred and twenty five kine (in respect of the merit it would produce).²⁴ Devoted to penances and truth, proficient (in the scriptures and all acts) through dutiful services rendered to his preceptor, endued with forgiveness of disposition, engaged in the worship of the deities, possessed of a tranquil soul, pure (in body and mind), enlightened, observant of all duties, and freed from every kind of egotism, that man who makes a gift of a cow unto a Brāhmana, certainly attains

* 'Govritti' is imitating the cow in the matter of providing for the morrow. Hence, one who never thinks of the morrow and never stores anything for future use, is meant.—T.

to great merit through that act of his, viz., the gift, according to proper rites, of a cow yielding copious milk. Hence, one, with singleness of devotion, observant of truth, and engaged in humbly serving one's preceptor, should always make gifts of kine.*²⁵⁻²⁶ Hear, O Cakra, what the merit is of that person who, duly studying the Vedas, shows reverence for kine, who always becomes glad at sight of kine, and who, since his birth always bows his head unto kine.²⁷ The merit that becomes one's by performing the Rājasuya sacrifice, the merit that becomes one's by making gifts of heaps of gold, that high merit is acquired by a person who shows such reverence for kine. Righteous Rishis and high-souled persons crowned with success have said so.²⁸ Devoted to truth, possessed of a tranquil soul, free from cupidity, always truthful in speech, and behaving with reverence towards kine with the steadiness of a vow, the man who, for a whole year, before himself taking any food, regularly presents some food to kine, wins the merit, by such an act, of the gift of a thousand kine.²⁹ That man who takes only one meal a day and who gives away the entire quantity of his other meal unto kine,—verily, that man, who thus reverences kine with the steadiness of a vow and shows such compassion towards them,—enjoys for ten years unlimited felicity.³⁰ That man who confines himself to only one meal a day and with the other meal saved for some time purchases a cow and makes a gift of it (unto a Brāhmana), earns, through that gift, O thou of a hundred sacrifices, the eternal merit that attaches to the gift of as many kine as there are hairs on the body of that single cow so given away.³¹ These are declarations in respect of the merits that Brāhmanas acquire by making gifts of kine. Listen now to the merits that Kshatriyas may win. It has been said that a Kshatriya, by purchasing a cow in this manner and making a gift of it unto a Brāhmana, acquires great felicity for five years. A Vaiçya, by such conduct, acquires only half the merit of a Kshatriya, and a Cudra, by such conduct, earns half the merit

* 'Etachcha' in 25 implies gift of a cow, and 'enam' refers to a Brāhmana. 'Dwijāya dattwā &c.' in the first line of 26 seems to be an elaboration of 'Etachcha.'—T.

that a Vaiṣya does.³² That man who sells himself and with the proceeds thereof purchases kine and gives them away unto Brāhmanas, enjoys felicity in Heaven for as long a period as kine are seen on Earth.³³ It has been said, O highly blessed one, that in every hair of such kine as are purchased with the proceeds obtained by selling oneself, there is a region of inexhaustible felicity. That man who having acquired kine by battle makes gifts of them (unto Brāhmanas),³⁴ acquires as much merit as he who makes gifts of kine after having purchased the same with the proceeds of selling oneself. That man who, in the absence of kine, makes a gift of a cow made of sesame seeds, restraining his senses the while, is rescued by such a cow from every kind of calamity or distress. Such a man sports in great felicity.³⁵ The mere gift of kine is not fraught with merit. The considerations of deserving recipients, of time, of the kind of kine, and of the ritual to be observed, should be attended to. One should ascertain the proper time for making a gift of kine. One should also ascertain the distinctive qualifications of both Brāhmanas (who are to receive them) and of kine themselves (which are to be given away). Kine should not be given unto one in whose abode they are likely to suffer from fire or the sun.³⁶ One who is rich in Vedic lore, who is of pure lineage, who is endued with a tranquil soul, who is devoted to the performance of sacrifices, who fears the commission of sin, who is possessed of varied knowledge, who is compassionate towards kine, who is mild in behaviour, who accords protection unto all that seek it of him, and who has no means of sustenance assigned unto him, is regarded as a proper person for receiving a gift of kine.³⁷ Unto a Brāhmana who has no means of sustenance, unto him while he is exceedingly afflicted for want of food (in a time of famine, for example), for purposes of agriculture, for a child born in consequence of Homa, for the purposes of his preceptor, for the sustenance of a child born (in the ordinary course), should a cow be given. Verily, the gift should be made at a proper time and in a proper place.*³⁸ Those kine, O Cakra, whose dispositions are well

* 'Homyahetoh prasute' implies 'for a child born in consequence of

known, which have been acquired as honoraria for knowledge, or which have been purchased in exchange for other animals (such as goats, sheep, &c.), or which have been won by prowess of arms, or obtained as marriage-dower, or which have been acquired by being rescued from situations of danger, or which, incapable of being maintained by their poor owners, have been made over for careful keep, to one's house with the desire of remaining there, are, for such reasons, regarded as proper objects of gift.³⁹ Those kine which are strong of body, which have good dispositions, and which emit an agreeable fragrance, are applauded in the matter of gifts. As Gangā is the foremost of all streams, even so is a Kapilā cow the foremost of all animals of the bovine breed.⁴⁰ Abstaining from all food and living only upon water for three nights, and sleeping for the same period upon the bare earth, one should make gifts of kine unto Brāhmanas after having gratified them with other presents. Such kine, freed from every vice, should, at the same time, be accompanied by healthy calves that have not been weaned. Having made the gift, the giver should live for the next three days in succession on food consisting only of the products of the cow.*⁴¹ By giving away a cow that is of good disposition, that quietly suffers herself to be milked, that always brings forth living and hale calves, and that does not fly away from the owner's abode, the giver enjoys felicity in the next world for as many years as there are hairs on her body.⁴² Similarly, by giving unto a Brāhmana a bull that is capable of bearing heavy burthens, that is young and strong and docile, that quietly bears the yoke of the plough, and that is possessed of such energy as is

a Homa.' The fact is, ascetics sometimes created children without the intervention of women and by efficacy of the Homa alone. At such times should people make gifts of kine unto such sires. The mention of 'Vāla-samvridhdhaye' afterwards implies the birth of children in the usual course.—T.

* 'Kshirapaih' implies calves that are yet unweaned ; that is, the cow should be given at such a time when she is still yielding milk ; when, in fact, her calf has not learnt to eat or drink anything besides the milk of its dam.—T.

sufficient to undergo even great labour, one attains to such regions as are his who gives away ten kine.⁴³ That person who rescues kine and Brāhmanas (from danger) in the wilderness, O Kauçika, becomes himself rescued from every kind of calamity. Hear what his merit is.*⁴⁴ The merit such a man acquires is equal to the eternal merit of a Horse-sacrifice. Such a person attains to whatever end he desires at the hour of death.⁴⁵ Many a region of felicity,—in fact, whatever happiness he covets in his heart,—becomes attainable to him in consequence of such act of his.⁴⁶ Verily, such a man, permitted by kine, lives honored in every region of felicity. That man who follows kine every day in the woods with this intention,⁴⁷ himself subsisting the while on grass and cowdung and leaves of trees, his heart freed from desire of fruit, his senses restrained from every improper object, and his mind purified of all dross,—that man—O thou of a hundred sacrifices, lives in joy and freed from the dominion of desire in my region or in any other region of happiness that he wishes, in the company of the deities ! ”—⁴⁸

SECTION LXXIV.

“Indra said,—I wish to know, O Grandsire, what the end is that is attained by him who consciously steals a cow or who sells one from motives of cupidity.—¹

“The Grandsire said,—Hear what the consequences are that overtake those persons that steal a cow for killing her for food or selling her for wealth, or making a gift of her unto a Brāhmana.² He who, without being checked by the restraints of the Scriptures, sells a cow, or kills one, or eats the flesh of a cow, or they who, for the sake of wealth, suffer a person to kill kine,³—all these, viz., he that kills, he that eats, and he that permits the slaughter,—rot in hell for as many years as

* The correct reading of the second line is ‘kshanena vipramuchyeta’ as in the Bombay text, and not ‘kshemena vipramuchyeran.’ The latter reading yields almost no sense. The Burdwan translator, who has committed grave blunders throughout the Anuṣṭupika, adheres to the incorrect reading, and makes nonsense of the Verse,—T.

there are hairs on the body of the cow so slain.*⁴ O thou of great puissance, those faults and those kinds of faults that have been said to attach to one that obstructs a Brāhmana's sacrifice, are said to attach to the sale and the theft of kine.⁵ That man who having stolen a cow makes a gift of her unto a Brāhmana, enjoys felicity in Heaven as the reward of the gift but suffers misery in Hell for the sin of theft for as long a period.⁶ Gold has been said to constitute the Dakshinā, O thou of great splendour, in gifts of kine. Indeed, gold has been said to be the best Dakshinā in all sacrifices.⁷ By making a gift of kine one is said to rescue one's ancestors to the seventh degree as also one's descendants to the seventh degree. By giving away kine with the Dakshinā of gold, one rescues one's ancestors and descendants of double the number.⁸ The gift of gold is the best of gifts. Gold is, again, the best Dakshinā. Gold is a great cleanser, O Cakra, and is, indeed, the best of all cleansing objects.⁹ O thou of a hundred sacrifices, gold has been said to be the sanctifier of the entire race of him who gives it away. I have thus, O thou of great splendour, told thee in brief of Dakshinā !—¹⁰

"Bhishma said,—'Even this was said by the Grandsire unto Indra, O chief of Bharata's race! Indra imparted it unto Daçaratha, and Daçaratha in his turn unto his son Rāma.¹¹ Rāma of Raghu's race imparted it unto his dear brother Lakshmana of great fame. While dwelling in the woods, Lakshmana imparted it unto the Rishis.¹² It has then come down from generation to generation, for the Rishis of rigid vows held it amongst themselves as also the righteous kings of the Earth.¹³ My preceptor, O Yudhishtira, communicated it to me. That Brāhmana who recites it every day in the assemblies of Brāhmanas, in sacrifices, or at gifts of kine, or when two persons meet together, obtains hereafter many regions of inexhaustible felicity where he always resides with the deities as

* In Verse 3, 'vikrayārtham' is followed, as the Commentator rightly explains, by 'niyunkta' or some such word. 'Vikrayārtham hinsyāt' may mean 'killing for sale.' This, however, should be pleonastic with reference to what follows.—T.

his companions.¹⁴⁻¹⁵ The holy Brahman, the supreme Lord, had said so (unto Indra on the subject of kine).'¹⁶

SECTION LXXV.

"Yudhishthira said,—'I have been greatly assured, O thou of puissance, by thee thus discoursing unto me of duties! I shall, however, give expression to the doubts I have. Do thou explain them to me, O grandsire!¹ What are the fruits, declared in the scriptures, of the vows that men observe! Of what nature are the fruits, O thou of great splendour, of observances of other kinds? What, again, are the fruits of one's studying the Vedas properly?² What are the fruits of gifts, and what those of holding the Vedas in memory? What are the fruits that attach to the teaching of the Vedas? I desire to know all this.³ What, O grandsire, are the merits attaching to the non-acceptance of gifts in this world! What fruits are seen to attach to him who makes gifts of knowledge?⁴ What are the merits acquired by persons that are observant of the duties of their order, as also by heroes that do not fly from battle? What are the fruits that have been declared to attach to the observance of purity and to the practice of Brahmacharya?⁵ What are the merits that attach to the service of the father and of the mother? What also are the merits of serving preceptors and teachers, and what the merits of compassion and kindness?⁶ I desire to know all this, O grandsire, truly and in detail, O thou that art conversant with all the scriptures! Great is the curiosity I feel!'⁷

"Bhishma said,—'Eternal regions of felicity become his who having properly commenced a Vrata (vow) completes its observance according to the scriptures, without a break.⁸ The fruits of Niyamas, O king, are visible even in this world. These rewards that thou hast won are those of Niyamas and sacrifices.⁹ The fruits that attach to the study of the Vedas are seen both

* 'Vratas' (rendered as 'vows') and 'Niyamas' (rendered as 'observances') differ in this respect that the former involve positive acts of worship along with the observance of or abstention from particular practices, while the latter involves only such observance or abstention.—T.

here and hereafter. The person who is devoted to the study of the Vedas is seen to sport in felicity both in this world and in the region of Brahma.¹⁰ Listen now to me, O king, as I tell thee in detail what the fruits are of self-restraint. They that are self-restrained are happy everywhere. They that are self-restrained are always in the enjoyment of that felicity which attaches to the absence or subjugation of desire.¹¹ They that are self-restrained are competent to go everywhere at will. They that are self-restrained are capable of destroying every foe. Without doubt, they that are self-restrained succeed in obtaining everything they seek.¹² They that are self-restrained, O son of Pāndu, obtain the fruition of every wish. The happiness that men enjoy in Heaven through penances and prowess, (in arms), through gift, and through diverse sacrifices, becomes theirs that are self-restrained and forgiving.¹³ Self-restraint is more meritorious than gift. A giver, after making a gift unto the Brāhmanas, may yield to the influence of wrath. A self-restrained man, however, never yields to wrath. Hence self-restraint is superior (in point of merit) to gift. That man who makes gifts without yielding to wrath, succeeds in attaining to eternal regions of felicity.¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Wrath destroys the merit of a gift. Hence self-restraint is superior to gift.¹⁶ There are various invisible places, O monarch, numbering by ten thousands, in Heaven. Existing in all the regions of Heaven, these places belong to the Rishis. Persons, leaving this world, attain to them and become transformed into deities.¹⁷ O king, the great Rishis repair thither, aided only by their self-restraint, and as the end of their efforts to attain to a region of superior happiness. Hence, self-restraint is superior (in efficacy) to gift.¹⁸ The person who becomes a preceptor (for teaching the Vedas), and who duly worships the fire, taking leave of all his afflictions in this world, enjoys inexhaustible felicity, O king, in the region of Brahma.¹⁹ That man who, having himself studied the Vedas, imparts a knowledge thereof unto righteous disciples, and who praises the acts of his own preceptor, attains to great honors in Heaven.²⁰ That Kshatriya who takes to the study of the Vedas, to the performance of sacrifices, to the making of gifts, and who rescues the lives of others in battle, similar-

ly attains to great honors in Heaven.²¹ The Vaiçya who, observant of the duties of his order, makes gifts, reaps as the fruit of those gifts, a crowning reward. The Cudra who duly observes the duties of his order (which consist of services rendered to the three other orders) wins Heaven as the reward of such services.²² Diverse kinds of heroes have been spoken of (in the scriptures). Listen to me as I expound to thee what the rewards are that they attain to. The rewards are fixed of a hero belonging to a heroic race.²³ There are heroes of sacrifice, heroes of self-restraint, heroes of truth, and others equally entitled to the name of hero. There are heroes of battle, and heroes of gift or liberality among men.²⁴ There are many persons who may be called the heroes of the Sāṅkhya faith as, indeed, there are many others that are called heroes of Yoga. There are others that are regarded as heroes in the matter of forest-life, of house-holding or domesticity, and of renunciation (or Sanyāsa).²⁵ Similarly, there are others that are called heroes of the intellect, and also heroes of forgiveness. There are other men who live in tranquillity and who are regarded as heroes of righteousness.²⁶ There are diverse other kinds of heroes that practise diverse other kinds of vows and observances. There are heroes devoted to the study of the Vedas and heroes devoted to the teaching of the same.²⁷ There are, again, men that come to be regarded as heroes for the devotion with which they wait upon and serve their preceptors, as indeed, heroes in respect of the reverence they show for their sires. There are heroes in respect of obedience to mothers, and heroes in the matter of the life of mendicancy they lead.²⁸ There are heroes in the matter of hospitality to guests, whether living as forest recluses or as house-holders. All these heroes attain to very superior regions of felicity which are, of course, acquired by them as the rewards of their own acts.²⁹ Holding all the Vedas in memory, or ablutions performed in all the sacred waters, may or may not be equal to telling the Truth every day in one's life.³⁰ A thousand Horse-sacrifices and Truth were once weighed in the balance. It was seen that Truth weighed heavier than a thousand Horse-sacrifices.³¹ It is by Truth that the Sun is imparting heat ; it is by Truth that fire blazes up ; it is

by Truth that the winds blow ; verily, everything rests upon Truth.³² It is Truth that gratifies the deities, the Pitris, and the Brāhmanas. Truth has been said to be the highest duty. Therefore, no one should ever transgress Truth.³³ The Munis are all devoted to Truth. Their prowess depends upon Truth. They also swear by Truth. Hence Truth is pre-eminent. All truthful men, O chief of Bharata's race, succeed by their truthfulness in attaining to Heaven and sporting there in felicity.³⁴ Self-restraint is the attainment of the reward that attaches to Truth. I have discoursed on it with my whole heart. The man of humble heart who is possessed of self-restraint, without doubt, attains to great honors in Heaven.³⁵ Listen now to me, O lord of Earth, as I expound to thee the merits of Brahmacharyya. That man who practises the vow of Brahmacharyya from his birth to the time of his Death,³⁶ know, O king, has nothing unattainable ! Many millions of Rishis are residing in the region of Brahma.³⁷ All of them, while here, were devoted to Truth, and self-restrained, and had their vital seed drawn up. The vow of Brahmacharyya, O king, duly observed by a Brāhmana, is sure to burn all his sins. The Brāhmana is said to be a blazing fire. In those Brāhmanas that are devoted to penances, the deity of fire becomes visible.³⁸⁻³⁹ If a Brahmchārin yields to wrath in consequence of any slight, the chief of the deities himself trembles in fear. Even this is the visible fruit of the vow of Brahmacharyya that is observed by the Rishis.⁴⁰ Listen to me, O Yudhishtira, what the merit is that attaches to the worship of the father and the mother. He who dutifully serves his father without ever crossing him in anything,⁴¹ or similarly serves his mother or (elder) brother or other senior or preceptor, it should be known, O king, earns a residence in Heaven. The man of cleansed soul, in consequence of such service rendered to his seniors, has never to even behold Hell.' "⁴²

SECTION LXXVI.

"Yudhishtira said,—'I desire, O king, to hear thee discourse in detail upon those high ordinances which regulate

gifts of kine, for it is by making gifts (of kine) according to those ordinances that one attains to innumerable regions of eternal felicity !¹

“Bhishma said,—‘There is no gift, O lord of Earth, that is higher in point of merit than the gift of kine. A cow, lawfully acquired, if given away, immediately rescues the whole race of the giver.² That ritual which sprang for the benefit of the righteous, was subsequently declared for the sake of all creatures. That ritual has come down from primeval time. It existed even before it was declared. Verily, O king, listen to me as I recite to thee that ritual which affects the gift of kine.*³ In days of yore, when a number of kine (intended to be given away) was brought (before him), king Māndhātṛi, filled with doubt in respect of the ritual he should observe (in actually giving them away), properly questioned Vrihaspati (the preceptor of the celestials) for an explanation of that doubt.⁴ Vrihaspati said,—Duly observing restraints the while, the giver of kine should, on the previous day, properly honor the Brāhmanas and appoint the (actual) time of gift. As regards the kine to be given away, they should be of the class called Rohini.⁵ The kine also should be addressed with the words—Samange and Vahule.—Entering the fold where the kine are kept, the following Crutis should be uttered,⁶—‘The cow is my mother. The bull is my sire. (Give me) Heaven and Earthly prosperity ! The cow is my refuge !—Entering the fold and acting in this way, the giver should pass the night there. He should again utter the formula when actually giving away the kine.†⁷ The giver, thus residing with the kine in

* The orthodox belief is that all rituals are literally eternal. As eternal, they existed before anybody declared them or set them down in holy writ. The ritual in respect of gifts of kine sprang in this way, i. e., in primeval time. It was only subsequently declared or set down in holy writ.—T.

† In Verse 5, if instead of the reading ‘ḡwah,’ ‘swa’ be adopted, the meaning would be ‘knowing that he would have to die.’ A ‘Rohini’ is a red cow. The words ‘samangā’ and ‘vahulā’ are Vedic terms applied to the cow. The Sandhi in ‘vahuleti’ is *ārsha*. The formula or Mantras that should be uttered in actually giving away the kine occur in the scriptures.—T.

the fold without doing anything to restrain their freedom, and lying down on the bare earth (without driving away the gnats and other insects that would annoy him as they annoy the kine), becomes immediately cleansed of all his sins in consequence of his reducing himself to a state of perfect similitude with the kine.⁸ When the Sun rises in the morning, thou shouldst give away the cow, accompanied by her calf and a bull. As the reward of such an act, Heaven will certainly become attainable to thee. The blessings also that are indicated by the Mantras will also be thine.⁹ The Mantras contain these references to kine: Kine are endued with the elements of strength and energetic exertion. Kine have in them the element of wisdom. They are the source of that immortality which sacrifice achieves. They are the refuge of all energy. They are the steps by which earthly prosperity is won. They constitute the eternal course of the universe. They lead to the extension of one's race.¹⁰ Let the kine (I give away) destroy my sins. They have that in them which partakes the nature of both Surya and Soma. Let them be aids to my attainment of Heaven. Let them betake themselves to me as a mother takes to her offspring. Let all other blessings also be mine that have not been named in the Mantras I have uttered!¹¹ In the alleviation or cure of phthisis and other wasting diseases, and in the matter of achieving freedom from the body, if a person takes the help of the five products of the cow, kine become inclined to confer blessings upon the person like the river Saraswati.—Ye kine, ye are always conveyers of all kinds of merit! Gratified with me, do ye appoint a desirable end for me!¹² I have today become what ye are! By giving you away, I really give myself away.—(After these words have been uttered by the giver, the receiver should say.)—Ye are no longer owned by him who gives you away! Ye have now become mine. Possessed of the nature of both Surya and Soma, do ye cause both the giver and the receiver to blaze forth will all kinds of prosperity!¹³—(As already indicated), the giver should duly utter the words occurring in the first part of the above Verse. The regenerate recipient, conversant with the ritual that regulates the gift of kine, should, when receiving

the kine in gift, utter (as already said) the words occurring in the latter half of the above Verse.¹⁴ The man who, instead of a cow, gives away the usual value thereof or cloths or gold, comes to be regarded as the giver of a cow. The giver, when giving away the usual value of a cow (as the substitute of a cow), should utter the words,—This cow with face upturned is being given away. Do thou accept her!—The man who gives away cloths (as the substitute of a cow) should utter the words,—Bhavitavyā—(meaning that the gift should be regarded as representing a cow). The man who gives away gold (as the substitute of a cow) should utter the word,—Vaishnavi (meaning, this gold that I give away is of the form and nature of a cow).¹⁵—Even these are the words that should be uttered in the order of the kind of gift mentioned above. The reward that is reaped by making such vicarious gifts of kine is residence in Heaven for six and thirty thousand years, eight thousand years, and twenty thousand years respectively.¹⁶ Even these are the merits, respectively, of gifts of things as substitutes of kine. While, as regards him who gives an actual cow all the merits that attach to vicarious gifts of kine become his at only the eighth step (homewards) of the recipient.*¹⁷ He that gives an actual cow becomes endued with righteous behaviour in this world. He that gives the value of a cow becomes freed from every kind of fear. He that gives a cow (as a substitute in this way for a real cow) never meets with sorrow. All the three, as also they that regularly go through their ablutions and other acts at early dawn, and he that is well conversant with the Mahābhārata, it is well known, attain to the regions of Vishnu and Soma.¹⁸ Having given away a cow, the giver should, for three nights, adopt the vaccine vow, and pass one night with kine. Commencing again from that lunation, num-

* The Commentator explains that 'gavādinām' in the first line refers to 'gopratinidhinām.' The second line is very terse. The sense is that at only the eighth step in the homeward journey of the recipient, all the merits attaching to vicarious gifts become his who gives an actual cow : what need, therefore, be said of that merit when the recipient reaches home and draws from the cow the means of worshipping his domestic fire, entertaining his guests, &c?—T.

bering the eighth, which is known by the name of Kāmyā, he should pass three nights, supporting himself entirely on milk and the urine and dung of the cow.*¹⁹ By giving away a bull, one attains to the merit that attaches to the divine vow (Brahmacharyya). By giving away a couple of kine, one acquires the mastery of the Vedas. That man who performs a sacrifice and makes gifts of kine agreeably to the ritual laid down, attains to many regions of a superior character. These, however, are not attainable by the person who is unacquainted with that ritual (and who, therefore, gives away kine without observing the scriptural declarations).²⁰ That man who gives away even a single cow that yields a copious measure of milk, acquires the merit of giving away all desirable things on Earth collected together. What need, therefore, be said of the gift of many such kine as yield Havya and Kavya in consequence of their full udders? The merit that attaches to the gift of superior oxen is greater than that which attaches to the gift of kine.²¹ One should not, by imparting a knowledge of this ritual, benefit a person that is not one's disciple or that is not observant of vows or that is bereft of faith or that is possessed of a crooked understanding. Verily, this religion is a mystery, unknown to most people. One that knows it should not speak of it at every place.²² There are, in the world, many men that are bereft of faith. There are among men many persons that are mean and that resemble Rākshasas. This religion, if imparted unto them, would lead to evil. It would be productive of equal evil if imparted to such sinful men as have taken shelter in atheism.²³—Listen to me, O king, as I recite to thee the names of those righteous monarchs that have attained to regions of great felicity as the reward of those gifts of kine which they made agreeably to the instructions of Vrihaspati.²⁴ Uçinara, Viçwagaçwa, Nriga, Bhagiratha, the celebrated Māndhātri the son of Yuvanāçwa, king Muchukunda, Bhuridyumna, Naishadha, Somaka,²⁵ Pururavas, Bharata of imperial sway

* 'Ashtami' is the eighth day of the lunar fortnight. There must be two Ashtamis in every lunar month. A particular Ashtami is known as the Kāmyā or the Goshtha. On that day, kine are worshipped with sandal paste, vermilion, floral wreaths, &c.—T.

to whose race belongs all the Bhāratas, the heroic Rāma the son of Daśaratha, and many other celebrated kings of great achievements,²⁶ and also king Dilipa of widely-known deeds, all, in consequence of their gifts of kine agreeably to the ritual, attained to Heaven. King Māndhātṛi was always observant of sacrifices, gifts, penances, kingly duties, and gifts of kine.²⁷ Therefore, O son of Prithā, do thou also bear in mind those instructions of Vrihaspati which I have recited unto thee (in respect of gifts of kine). Having obtained the kingdom of the Kurus, do thou, with a cheerful heart, make gifts of good kine unto foremost of Brāhmanas ! ”²⁸

Vaiṣampāyana continued,—“Thus addressed by Bhishma on the subject of properly making gifts of kine, king Yudhishtira did all that Bhishma wished. Verily, king Yudhishtira bore in mind the whole of that religion which the preceptor of the deities imparted unto the royal Māndhātṛi.²⁹ Yudhishtira from that time began to always make gifts of kine and to support himself on grains of barley and on cowdung as both his food and drink. The king also began to sleep from that day on the bare earth, and possessed of restrained soul and resembling a bull in conduct, he became the foremost of monarchs.³⁰ The Kuru king from that day became very attentive to kine and always worshipped them, hymning their praises. From that day, the king gave up the practice of yoking kine unto his vehicles. Whithersoever he had occasion to go, he proceeded on cars drawn by horses of good mettle.”³¹

SECTION LXXVII.

Vaiṣampāyana said,—“King Yudhishtira endued with humility, once again questioned the royal son of Cāntanu on the subject of gifts of kine in detail.¹

“The king said,—‘Do thou, O Bhārata, once more discourse to me in detail on the merits of giving away kine. Verily, O hero, I have not been satiated with hearing thy nectar-like words ! ’ ”²

* ‘Cikhi’ means a bull, so called from the hump it carries. The construction is ‘cikhi Vrisha iva &c.’—T.

Vaiçampāyana continued,—“Thus addressed by king Yudhishtira the just, Cāntanu’s son began to discourse to him once again, in detail, on the merits attaching to the gift of kine.³

“Bhishma said,—‘By giving unto a Brāhmana a cow possessed of a calf, endued with docility and other virtues, young in years, and wrapped round with a piece of cloth, one becomes cleansed of all one’s sins.⁴ There are many regions (in Hell) which are sunless. One who makes the gift of a cow has not to go thither.⁵ That man, however, who gives unto a Brāhmana a cow that is incapable of drinking or eating, that has her milk dried up, that is endued with senses all of which have been weakened, and that is diseased and overcome with decrepitude, and that may, therefore, be likened to a tank whose water has been dried up,—indeed, the man who gives such a cow unto a Brāhmana and thereby inflicts only pain and disappointment upon him, has certainly to enter into dark Hell.⁶ That cow which is wrathful and vicious, or diseased, or weak, or which has been purchased without the price agreed upon having been paid, or which would only afflict the regenerate recipient with distress and disappointment, should never be given. The regions such a man may acquire (as the rewards of other acts of righteousness performed by him) would fail to give him any happiness or impart to him any energy.⁷ Only such kine as are strong, endued with good behaviour, young in years, and possessed of fragrance, are applauded by all (in the matter of gifts). Verily, as Gangā is the foremost of all rivers, even so is a Kapilā cow the foremost of all kine.’⁸

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Why, O grandsire, do the righteous applaud the gift of a Kapilā cow (as more meritorious) when all good kine that are given away should be regarded as equal? O thou of great puissance, I wish to hear what the distinction is that attaches to a Kapilā cow. Thou art, verily, competent to discourse to me on this topic!’⁹

“Bhishma said,—‘I have, O son, heard old men recite this

* A Kapilā cow is one that gives a copious measure of milk whenever she is milked, and is possessed of various other accomplishments and virtues.—T.

history respecting the circumstances under which the Kapilā cow was created. I shall recite that old history to thee!¹⁰ In days of yore, the Self-born Brahman commanded the Rishi Daksha, saying,—Do thou create living creatures!—From desire of doing good to creatures, Daksha, in the first instance, created food.¹¹ Even as the deities exist, depending upon nectar, all living creatures, O puissant one, live depending upon the sustenance assigned by Daksha.¹² Among all objects mobile and immobile, the mobile are superior. Among mobile creatures, Brāhmanas are superior. The sacrifices are all established upon them.¹³ It is by sacrifice that Soma (nectar) is got. Sacrifice has been established upon kine.* The gods become gratified through sacrifices. As regards the Creation then, the means of support came first, creatures came next.¹⁴ As soon as creatures were born, they began to cry aloud for food. All of them then approached their creator who was to give them food, like children approaching their father or mother.¹⁵ Knowing the intention which moved all his creatures, the holy lord of all creatures, *viz.*, Daksha, for the sake of the beings he had created, himself drank a quantity of nectar.¹⁶ He became gratified with the nectar he quaffed and thereupon an eructation came out, diffusing an excellent perfume all around. As the result of that eructation, Daksha saw that it gave birth to a cow which he named Surabhi. This Surabhi was thus a daughter of his, that had sprung from his mouth.¹⁷ That cow called Surabhi brought forth a number of daughters who came to be regarded as the mothers of the world. Their complexion was like that of gold, and they were all Kapilās. They were the means of sustenance for all creatures.¹⁸ As those kine, whose complexion resembled that of Amrita, began to pour milk, the froth of that milk arose and began to spread on every side, even as when the waves of a running stream dashing against one another, copious froth is produced that spreads on every side.¹⁹ Some of that froth fell, from the mouths of the calves that were sucking, upon the head of Mahādeva who was then sitting on

* For without ghee, which is produced from milk, there can be no sacrifice. The 'sa' may refer to 'Soma,' but Sacrifice is evidently ment.—T.

the Earth. The puissant Mahādeva thereupon, filled with wrath, cast his eyes upon those kine.²⁰ With that third eye of his which adorns his forehead, he seemed to burn those kine as he looked at them. Like the Sun tinging masses of clouds with diverse colors, the energy that issued from the third eye of Mahādeva produced, O monarch, diverse complexions in those kine. Those amongst them, however, which succeeded in escaping from the glance of Mahādeva by entering the region of Soma,²¹⁻²² remained of the same color with which they were born, for no change was produced in their complexion. Seeing that Mahādeva had become exceedingly angry, Daksha, the lord of all creatures, addressed him, saying,²³—Thou hast, O great deity, been drenched with nectar. The milk or the froth that escapes from the mouths of calves sucking their dams is never regarded as impure remnant.* Chandramas, after drinking the nectar, pours it once more. It is not, however, on that account, looked upon as impure.²⁴ After the same manner, the milk that these kine yield, being born of nectar, should not be regarded as impure (even though the udders have been touched by the calves with their mouths). The wind can never become impure. Fire can never become impure. Gold can never become impure. The Ocean can never become impure.²⁵ The Nectar, even when drunk by the deities, can never become impure. Similarly, the milk of a cow, even when her udders are sucked by her calf, can never become impure. These kine will support all these worlds with the milk they will yield and the ghee that will be manufactured therefrom.²⁶ All creatures wish to enjoy the auspicious wealth, identifiable with nectar, that kine possess!—Having said these words, the lord of creatures, Daksha, made a present unto Mahādeva of a bull with certain kine.²⁷ Daksha gratified the heart of Rudra, O Bhārata, with that present. Mahādeva, thus gratified, made that bull his vehicle. And it was after the form of that bull that

* The idea of 'uchchishṭa' is peculiarly Hindu and cannot be rendered into any other language. Everything that forms the remnant of a meal after one has left off eating, is 'uchchishṭa.' The calf sucks its dam. The udders, however, are not washed before milking the dam, for the milk coming out of them is not held to be impure remnant—T.

Mahādeva adopted the device on the standard floating on his battle-car. For this reason it is that Rudra came to be known as the bull-bannered deity.²⁸ It was on that occasion also that the celestials, uniting together, made Mahādeva the lord of animals. Indeed, the great Rudra became the Master of kine and is named as the bull-signed deity.²⁹ Hence, O king, in the matter of giving away kine, the gift is regarded as primarily desirable of Kapilā kine which are endued with great energy and possessed of color unchanged (from white).³⁰ Thus are kine the fore most of all creatures in the world. It is from them that the means have flowed of the sustenance of all the worlds. They have Rudra for their master. They yield Soma (nectar) in the form of milk. They are auspicious and sacred, and grantors of every wish and givers of life. A person by making a gift of a cow comes to be regarded as making a gift of every article that is desired to be enjoyed by men.³¹ That man who, desiring to attain to prosperity, reads with a pure heart and body these Verses on the origin of kine, becomes cleansed of all his sins and attains to prosperity and children and wealth and animals.³² He who makes a gift of a cow, O king, always succeeds in acquiring the merits that attach to gifts of Havya and Kavya, to the offer of oblations of water unto the Pitris, to other religious acts whose performance brings peace and happiness, to the gift of vehicles and cloths, and to the cherishing of children and the old.' "³³

Vaiçampāyana continued,—“Hearing these words of his grandsire, Prithā's son, *viz.*, the royal Yudhishtira of Ājāmida's race, uniting with his brothers, began to make gifts of both bulls and kine of different colors unto foremost of Brāhmanas.³⁴ Verily, for the purpose of subduing regions of felicity in the next, and winning great fame, king Yudhishtira performed many sacrifices and, as sacrificial presents, gave away hundreds of thousands of kine unto such Brāhmanas.”³⁴

SECTION LXXVIII.

“Bhishma said,—‘In days of yore, king Saudāsa born of Ikshāku's race, that foremost of eloquent men, on one occasion

approached his family priest, viz., Vaçishtha, that foremost of Rishis, crowned with ascetic success, capable of wandering through every region, the receptacle of Brahma, and endued with eternal life, and put to him the following question.¹⁻²

“Saudāsa said,—O holy one, O sinless one, what is that in the three worlds which is sacred and by reciting which at all times a man may acquire high merit?—”³

“Bhishma said,—‘Unto king Saudāsa who stood before him with head bent in reverence, the learned Vaçishtha, having first bowed unto kine and purified himself (in body and mind), discoursed upon the mystery relating to kine, a topic that is fraught with results highly beneficial to all persons.’⁴

“Vaçishtha said,—Kine are always fragrant. The perfume emanated by the exudation of the Amyris agallochum issues out of their bodies. Kine are the great refuge of all creatures. Kine constitute the great source of blessings unto all.⁵ Kine are the Past and the Future. Kine are the source of eternal growth. Kine are the root of Prosperity. Anything given to kine is never lost.⁶ Kine constitute the highest food. They are the best Havi for the deities. The Mantras called Swāhā and Vashat are forever established in kine.⁷ Kine constitute the fruit of sacrifices. Sacrifices are established in kine. Kine are the Future and the Past, and the Sacrifices rest on them.⁸ Morning and evening kine yield unto the Rishis, O foremost of men, Havi for use in Homa, O thou of great effulgence.⁹ They who make gifts of kine succeed in transcending all sins which they may have committed and all kinds of calamities into which they may fall, O thou of great puissance.¹⁰ The man possessing ten kine and making a gift of one cow, he possessing a hundred kine and making a gift of ten kine, and he possessing a thousand kine and making a gift of a hundred kine, all earn the same measure of merit.¹¹ That man who, though possessed of hundred kine, does not establish a domestic fire for daily worship, that man who though possessed of a thousand kine does not perform sacrifices, and that man who though possessed

* ‘Swastyayana’ is a ceremony of propitiation, productive of blessings and destructive of misery of every kind—T.

of wealth acts as a miser (by not making gifts and discharging the duties of hospitality), are all three regarded as not worthy of any respect.¹² Those men who make gifts of Kapilā kine with their calves and with vessels of white brass for milking them,—kine, that is, which are not vicious and which, while given away, are wrapped round with cloths,—succeed in conquering both this and the other world.¹³ Such persons as succeed in making gift of a bull that is still in the prime of youth, that has all its senses strong, and that may be regarded as the foremost one among hundreds of herds, that has large horns adorned with ornaments (of gold or silver), unto a Brāhmaṇa possessed of Vedic learning, succeed, O scorcher of foes, in attaining to great prosperity and affluence each time they take birth in the world.¹⁴⁻¹⁵ One should never go to bed without reciting the names of kine. Nor should one rise from bed in the morning without a similar recitation of the names of kine. Morning and evening one should bend one's head in reverence to kine. As the consequence of such acts, one is sure to attain to great prosperity.¹⁶ One should never feel any repugnance for the urine and the dung of the cow. One should never eat the flesh of kine. As the consequence of this, one is sure to attain to great prosperity.¹⁷ One should always take the names of kine. One should never show any disregard for kine in any way. If evil dreams are seen, men should take the names of kine.¹⁸ One should always bathe, using cowdung at the time. One should sit on dried cowdung. One should never cast one's urine and excreta and other secretions on cowdung. One should never obstruct kine in any way.¹⁹ One should eat, sitting on a cowhide purified by dipping it in water, and then cast one's eyes towards the west. Sitting with restrained speech, one should eat ghee, using the bare earth as one's dish. One reaps, in consequence of such acts, that prosperity of which kine are the source.*²⁰ One should pour libations on the fire,

* The Commentator explains that by a wet cowhide is meant a piece of cowhide that has been dipped in water and thus purified. 'Upaviṣya' is understood after 'Charmani.' The mention of 'bhūmau' implies the avoidance of dishes or plates or cups of white brass or other allowable metals. 'Gavām pushtim,' I understand, means 'the prosperity in respect of kine,' i. e., the prosperity which kine confer.—T.

using ghee for the purpose. One should cause Brāhmanas to utter blessings upon one, by presents of ghee. One should make gifts of ghee. One should also eat ghee. As the reward of such acts one is sure to attain to that prosperity which kine confer.²¹ That man who inspires a vaccine form made of sesame seeds by uttering the Vedic Mantras called by the name of Gomati, and then adorns that form with every kind of gems and makes a gift of it, has never to suffer any grief on account of all his acts of omission and commission.²²—Let kine that yield copious measures of milk and that have horns adorned with gold,—kine viz. that are Surabhis or the daughters of Surabhis,—approach me even as rivers approach the ocean!²³ I always look at kine. Let kine always look at me. Kine are ours. We are theirs. Ourselves are there where kine are!²⁴—Even thus, at night or day, in happiness or woe,—verily, at times of even great fear,—should a man exclaim. By uttering such words, he is certain to become freed from every fear.’²⁵

SECTION LXXIX.

“Vaçishtha said,—The kine that had been created in a former age practised the austere penances for a hundred thousand years with the desire of attaining to a position of great pre-eminence.¹ Verily, O scorcher of foes, they said unto themselves,—We shall, in this world, become the best of all kinds of Dakshinā in sacrifices, and we shall not be liable to be stained with any fault!² By bathing in water mixed with our dung, people shall become sanctified. The deities and men shall use our dung for the purpose of purifying³ all creatures mobile and immobile. They also that will give us away shall attain to those regions of happiness which will be ours.⁴—The puissant Brahman, appearing unto them at the conclusion of their austerities, gave them the boons they sought, saying,—

* The first line of Verse 4 seems to be connected with Verse 3. The second line of 4 seems to stand by itself. By connecting the first line of 4 with the second, the meaning will be—‘All mobile and immobile creatures that will give us away &c.’ Immobile creatures making gifts of kine would be utter nonsense.—T.

It shall be as ye wish ! Do ye (thus) rescue all the worlds !⁶—Crowned with fruition in respect of their wishes, they all rose up,—those mothers of both the Past and the Future. Every morning, people should bow with reverence unto kine. As the consequence of this, they are certain to win prosperity.⁶ At the conclusion of their penances, O monarch, kine became the refuge of the world. It is for this that kine are said to be highly blessed, sacred, and the foremost of all things. It is for this that kine are said to stay at the very head of all creatures.⁷ By giving away a Kapilā cow with a calf resembling herself, yielding a copious measure of milk, free from every vicious habit, and covered with a piece of cloth, the giver attains to great honors in the region of Brahma.⁸ By giving away a cow of red complexion, with a calf that resembles herself, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of Surya.⁹ By giving away a cow of variegated hue, with a calf similar to herself, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of Soma.¹⁰ By giving away a cow of white complexion, with a calf similar to herself, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of Indra.¹¹ By giving away a cow of dark complexion, with a calf similar to herself, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of Agni.¹² By giving away a cow of the complexion of smoke, with a calf similar to herself, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of Yama.¹³ By giving away a cow of the complexion of the foam of water, with a calf and a vessel of white brass for milking her, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to the region of Varuna.¹⁴ By giving away a cow whose complexion is like that of the dust blown by the wind, with a calf and a vessel of white brass for milking her, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of the Wind-god.¹⁵ By giving away a cow of the complexion of gold, having eyes of a tawny hue, with a calf and a vessel of white brass for milking

her, and covered with a piece of cloth, one enjoys the felicity of the region of Kuvera.¹⁶ By giving away a cow of the complexion of the smoke of straw, with a calf and a vessel of white brass for milking her, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to great honors in the region of the Pitris.¹⁷ By giving away a fat cow with the flesh of its throat hanging down and accompanied by her calf, one attains with ease to the high region of the Viçwedevas.¹⁸ By giving away a Gouri cow, with a calf similar to her, yielding milk, free from every vice, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to the region of the Vasus.¹⁹ By giving away a cow of the complexion of a white blanket, with a calf and a vessel of white brass, and covered with a piece of cloth, one attains to the region of the Sāddhyas.²⁰ By giving away a bull with a high hump and adorned with every jewel, the giver, O king, attains to the region of the Maruts.²¹ By giving away a bull of blue complexion, that is full-grown in respect of years and adorned with every ornament, the giver attains to the regions of the Gandharvas and the Apsaras.²² By giving away a cow with the flesh of her throat hanging down, and adorned with every ornament, the giver, freed from every grief, attains to those regions that belong to Prajāpati himself.²³ That man, O king, who habitually makes gifts of kine, proceeds, piercing through the clouds, on a car of solar effulgence to Heaven and shines there in splendour.²⁴ That man who habitually makes gifts of kine comes to be regarded as the foremost of his species. When thus proceeding to Heaven, he is received by a thousand celestial damsels of beautiful hips and adorned with handsome robes and ornaments. These girls wait upon him there and minister to his delight.²⁵ He sleeps there in peace and is awakened by the musical laughter of those gazelle-eyed damsels, the sweet notes of their Vinās, the soft strains of their Vallakis, and the melodious tinkle of their Nupuras.*²⁶ The man who makes gifts of kine resides in Heaven and is honored there for as many years as there are hairs on the bodies of the kine he

* 'Vallaki' is the Indian lute. The 'Nupura' is an ornament for the ankles.—T.

gives away. Falling off from Heaven (upon the exhaustion of his merit), such a man takes birth in the order of humanity and, in fact, in a superior family among men.—' ”²⁷

SECTION LXXX.

“Vāṣiṣṭha said,—Kine are yielders of ghee and milk. They are the sources of ghee and they have sprung from ghee. They are rivers of ghee, and eddies of ghee. Let kine ever be in my house !¹ Ghee is always my heart. Ghee is even established in my navel. Ghee is in every limb of mine. Ghee resides in my mind.² Kine are always at my front. Kine are always at my rear. Kine are on every side of my person. I live in the midst of kine !³—Having purified oneself by touching water, one should, morning and evening, recite these Mantras every day. By this, one is sure to be cleansed of all the sins one may commit in course of the day.⁴ They who make gifts of a thousand kine, departing from this world, proceed to the regions of the Gandharvas and the Apsaras where there are many palatial mansions made of gold and where the celestial Gangā, called the current of Vasu, runs.⁵ Givers of a thousand kine repair thither where run many rivers having milk for their water, cheese for their mire, and curds for their floating moss.⁶ That man who makes gifts of hundreds of thousands of kine agreeably to the ritual laid down in the scriptures, attains to high prosperity (here) and great honors in Heaven.⁷ Such a man causes both his paternal and maternal ancestors to the tenth degree to attain to regions of great felicity, and sanctifies his whole race.⁸ Kine are sacred. They are the foremost of all things in the world. They are verily the refuge of the universe. They are the mothers of the very deities. They are verily incomparable. They should be dedicated in sacrifices.⁹ When making journeys, one should proceed by their right (*i. e.*, keeping them to one's left). Ascertaining the proper time, they should be given away unto eligible persons.¹⁰ By giving away a Kapilā cow having large horns, accompanied by a calf and a vessel of white brass for milking her, and covered with a piece of cloth, one succeeds in entering, freed from fear, the palace of Yama that

is so difficult to enter.¹¹ One should always recite this sacred Mantra, *viz.*,—Kine are of beautiful form. Kine are of diverse forms. They are of universal form. They are the mothers of the universe. O, let kine approach me!¹²—There is no gift more sacred than the gift of kine. There is no gift that produces more blessed merit. There has been nothing equal to the cow, nor will there be anything that will equal her.¹³ With her skin, her hair, her horns, the hair of her tail, her milk, and her fat,—with all these together,—the cow upholds sacrifice. What thing is there that is more useful than the cow?¹⁴ Bending my head unto her with reverence, I adore the cow who is the mother of both the Past and the Future, and by whom the entire universe of mobile and immobile creatures is covered.¹⁵ O best of men, I have thus recited to thee only a portion of the high merits of kine. There is no gift in this world that is superior to the gift of kine. There is also no refuge in this world that is higher than kine.—¹⁶

“Bhishma continued,—‘That high-souled giver of land (*viz.*, king Saudāsa), thinking these words of the Rishi Vaçishtha to be foremost in point of importance, then made gifts of a very large number of kine unto the Brāhmanas, restraining his senses the while, and as the consequence of those gifts, the monarch succeeded in attaining to many regions of felicity in the next world.’ ”*¹⁷

SECTION LXXXI.

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Tell me, O grandsire, what is that which is the most sacred of all sacred things in the world, other than that which has been already mentioned, and which is the highest of all sanctifying objects.’¹

“Bhishma said,—‘Kine are the foremost of all objects. They are highly sacred and they rescue men (from all kinds of sin and distress). With their milk and with the Havi manufac-

* ‘Bhumidah’ is, literally, a giver of land. King Saudāsa, the Commentator explains, was known by the name of ‘Bhumidah’ in consequence of his liberality in the matter of giving away land unto the Brāhmanas.—T.

tured therefrom, kine uphold all creatures in the universe.³ O best of the Bharatas, there is nothing that is more sacred than kine. The foremost of all things in the three worlds, kine are themselves sacred and capable of cleansing others.³ Kine reside in a region that is even higher than the region of the deities. When given away, they rescue their givers. Men of wisdom succeed in attaining to Heaven by making gifts of kine.⁴ Yuvanāṣwa's son Māndhātṛi, Yayāti, and (his sire) Nahusha, used always to give away kine in thousands.⁵ As the reward of those gifts, they have attained to such regions as are unattainable by the very deities. There is, in this connection, O sinless one, a discourse delivered of old. I shall recite it to thee.⁶ Once on a time, the intelligent Cuka, having finished his morning rites, approached with a restrained mind his sire, that foremost of Rishis, viz., the Island-born Krishna, who is acquainted with the distinction between that which is superior and that which is inferior, and saluting him, said,—What is that sacrifice which appears to thee as the foremost of all sacrifices?⁷⁻⁸ What is that act by doing which men of wisdom succeed in attaining to the highest region? What is that sacred act by which the deities enjoy the felicity of Heaven?⁹ What constitutes the character of sacrifice as sacrifice? What is that upon which sacrifice rests? What is that which is regarded as the best by the deities? What is that sacrifice which transcends the sacrifices of this world? Do thou also tell me, O sire, what is that which is the most sacred of all things!¹⁰—Having heard these words of his son, O chief of Bharata's race, Vyāsa, the foremost of all persons conversant with duties, discoursed as follows unto him.¹¹

“Vyāsa said,—Kine constitute the stay of all creatures. Kine are the refuge of all creatures. Kine are the embodiment of merit. Kine are sacred, and kine are sanctifiers of all.¹² Formerly kine were hornless as it has been heard by us. For obtaining horns they adored the eternal and puissant Brahman.¹³ The puissant Brahman, seeing the kine paying their adorations to him and sitting in *prāya*, granted unto each of them what each desired.¹⁴ Thereafter their horns grew and each got what each desired. Of diverse colors, and

endued with horns, they began to shine in beauty, O son !¹⁵ Favored by Brahman himself with boons, kine are auspicious and yielders of Havya and Kavya. They are the embodiments of merit. They are sacred and highly blessed. They are possessed of excellent form and attributes.¹⁶ Kine constitute high and excellent energy. The gift of kine is very much applauded. Those good men who, freed from pride, make gifts of kine,¹⁷ are regarded as doers of righteous deeds and as givers of all articles. Such men, O sinless one, attain to the highly sacred region of kine.¹⁸ The trees there produce sweet fruits. Indeed, those trees are always adorned with excellent flowers and fruits. Those flowers, O best of regenerate persons, are endued with celestial fragrance.¹⁹ The entire soil of that region is made of gems. The sands there are all gold. The climate there is such that the excellencies of every season are felt. There is no mire, no dust. It is, indeed, highly auspicious.²⁰ The streams that run there shine in resplendence for the red lotuses blooming upon their bosoms, and for the jewells and gems and gold that occur in their banks and that display the effulgence of the morning Sun.²¹ There are many lakes also in that region on whose breasts are many lotuses, mixed here and there with *Nymphaea stellata*, and having their petals made of costly gems, and their filaments adorned with a complexion like that of gold.²² They are also adorned with flowering forests of the *Nerium odorum* with thousands of beautiful creepers twining round them, as also with forests of *Santānakas* bearing their flowery burthens.²³ There are rivers whose banks are variegated with many bright pearls and resplendent gems and shining gold.²⁴ Portions of those regions are covered with excellent trees that are decked with jewels and gems of every kind. Some of them are made of gold and some display the splendour of fire.²⁵ There stand many mountains made of gold, and many hills and eminences made of jewels and gems. These shine in beauty in consequence of their tall summits which are composed of all kinds of gems.²⁶ The trees that adorn those regions always put forth flowers and fruits, and are always covered with dense foliage. The flowers always emit a celestial fragrance and the fruits are exceedingly

sweet, O chief of Bhārata's race.²⁷ Those persons that are of righteous deeds, O Yudhishtira, always sport there in joy. Freed from grief and wrath, they pass their time there, crowned with the fruition of every wish.²⁸ Persons of righteous deeds, possessed of fame, sport there in happiness, moving from place to place, O Bhārata, on delightful vehicles of great beauty.²⁹ Auspicious bands of Apsaras always amuse them there, with music and dance. Indeed, O Yudhishtira, a person goes to such regions as the reward of his making gifts of kine.³⁰ Those regions which have for their lords Pushan, and the Māruts of great puissance, are attained to by givers of kine. In affluence the royal Varuna is regarded as pre-eminent. The giver of kine attains to affluence like that of Varuna himself. One should, with the steadiness of a vow, daily recite these Mantras declared by Prajāpati himself (in respect of kine), viz.,—Yugandharāh, Surupāh, Vahurupāh, Viṣwarupāh, and Mātara.^{*31-32}—He who serves kine with reverence and who follows them with humility, succeeds in obtaining many invaluable boons from kine who become gratified with him.³³ One should never, in even one's heart, do an injury to kine. One should, indeed, always confer happiness on them. One should always reverence kine and worship them, with bends of one's head.³⁴ He who does this, restraining his senses the while and filled with cheerfulness, succeeds in attaining to that felicity which is enjoyed by kine (and which kine alone can confer). One should for three days drink the hot urine of the cow. For the next three days one should drink the hot milk of the cow.³⁵ Having thus drunk for three days hot milk, one should next drink hot ghee for three days. Having in this way drunk hot ghee for three days, one should subsist for the next three days on air only.³⁶ That sacred thing by whose aid the deities

* These are the several names by which kine are known. The first is probably derived from kine bearing the plough and thus assisting at tillage of the soil. The second implies beauty of form. The third is derived from the cow being regarded as the origin of all things in the universe: all things, therefore, are only so many forms of the cow. Viṣwarupā implies the same thing. Mātara implies mothers, kine being regarded as the mothers of all.—T.

enjoy regions of felicity, that which is the most sacred of all sacred things, viz., ghee, should then be borne on the head.*³⁷ With the aid of ghee one should pour libations on the sacred fire. By making gifts of ghee, one should cause the Brāhmanas to utter benedictions on oneself. One should eat ghee and make gifts of ghee. As the reward of this conduct, one may then attain to that prosperity which belongs to kine.³⁸ That man who, for a month, subsists upon the gruel of barley picked up every day from cow-dung, becomes cleansed of sins as grave as the slaughter of a Brāhmana.³⁹ After their defeat at the hands of the Daityas, the deities practised this expiation. It was in consequence of this expiation that they succeeded in regaining their position as deities. Verily, it was through this that they regained their strength and became crowned with success.⁴⁰ Kine are sacred. They are embodiments of merit. They are high and most efficacious cleansers of all. By making gifts of kine unto the Brāhmanas one attains to Heaven.⁴¹ Living in a pure state, in the midst of kine, one should mentally recite those sacred Mantras that are known by the name of Gomati, after touching pure water. By doing this, one becomes purified and cleansed (of all sins).⁴² Brāhmanas of righteous deeds, who have been cleansed by knowledge, study of the Vedas, and observance of vows, should, only in the midst of sacred fires or kine or assemblies of Brāhmanas, impart unto their disciples a knowledge of the Gomati Mantras which are every way like unto a sacrifice (for the merit they produce). One should observe a fast for three nights for receiving the boon constituted by a knowledge of the import of the Gomati Mantras.⁴³⁻⁴⁴ The man who is desirous of obtaining a son may obtain it by adoring these Mantras. He who desires the possession of wealth may have his desire gratified by adoring these Mantras. The girl desirous of having a good husband may have her wish crowned with success by the same means. In fact, one may acquire the fruition of every wish one may cherish,

* Ghee is regarded so sacred because of its use in sacrifices. It is with the aid of ghee that the deities have become what they are. Itself sacred, it is also cleansing at the same time,—T.

by adoring these sacred Mantras.⁴⁶ When kine are gratified with the service one renders them, they are, without doubt, capable of granting the fruition of every wish. Even so, kine are highly blessed. They are the essential requisites of sacrifices. They are grantors of every wish. Know that there is nothing superior to kine !—⁴⁶

“Bhishma continued,—‘Thus addressed by his high-souled sire, Cuka, endued with great energy, began from that time to worship kine every day. Do thou also, O son, conduct thyself in the same way !’ ”⁴⁷

SECTION LXXXII.

“Yudhishtira said,—‘I have heard that the dung of the cow is endued with Cree. I desire to hear how this has been brought about. I have doubts, O grandsire, which thou shouldst dispel.’ ”¹

“Bhishma said,—In this connection is cited the old story, O monarch, of the conversation between kine and Cree, O best of the Bharatas !² Once on a time the goddess Cree, assuming a very beautiful form, entered a herd of kine. The kine, beholding her wealth of beauty, became filled with wonder.³

“‘The kine said,—Who art thou, O goddess? Whence hast thou become unrivalled on Earth for beauty? O highly blessed goddess, we have been filled with wonder at thy wealth of beauty !⁴ We desire to know who thou art. Who, indeed, art thou? Whither wilt thou proceed? O thou of very superior splendour of complexion, do tell us in detail all we wish to know !—⁵

“‘Cree said,—Blessed be ye, I am dear unto all creatures. Indeed, I am known by the name of Cree. Forsaken by me, the Daityas have been lost for ever.⁶ The deities, viz., Indra, Vivaswat, Soma, Vishnu, Varuna, and Agni, having obtained me, are sporting in joy and will do so for ever.⁷ Verily, the Rishis and the deities, only when they are endued

* ‘Cree’ is the goddess of Prosperity. The answer of Bhishma will explain the question fully,—T.

with me, become crowned with success. Ye kine, those beings meet with destruction into whom I do not enter!⁹ Religion, Wealth, and Pleasure, only when endued with me, become sources of happiness. Ye kine who are givers of happiness, know that I am possessed of even such energy!⁹ I wish to always reside in every one of you. Repairing to your presence, I solicit you. Be all of you endued with Cree!¹⁰

“The kine said,—Thou art fickle and restless. Thou sufferest thyself to be enjoyed by many persons. We do not desire to have thee! Blessed be thou, go whithersoever thou pleasest.¹¹ As regards ourselves, all of us are possessed of good forms. What need have we with thee? Go whithersoever thou likest. Thou hast already (by answering our questions) gratified us exceedingly!¹²

“Cree said,—Is it proper with you, ye kine, that you do not welcome me? I am difficult of being attained. Why then do you not accept me?¹³ It seems, ye creatures of excellent vows, that the popular proverb is true, viz., that it is certain that when one comes to another of one's own accord and without being sought, one meets with disregard.¹⁴ The gods, the Dānavas, the Gandharvas, the Piçāchas, the Uragas, the Rākshasas, and human beings succeed in obtaining me only after undergoing the severest austerities.¹⁵ Ye who have such energy, do ye take me! Ye amiable ones, I am never disregarded by any one in the three worlds of mobile and immobile creatures!¹⁶

“The kine said,—We do not disregard thee, O goddess! We do not show thee a slight! Thou art fickle and of a very restless heart. It is for this only that we take leave of thee!¹⁷ What need of much talk? Do thou go whithersoever thou choosest. All of us are endued with excellent forms. What need have we with thee, O sinless one?¹⁸

“Cree said,—Ye givers of honors, cast off by you in this way, I shall certainly be an object of disregard with all the world! Do ye show me grace!¹⁹ Ye are all highly blessed. Ye are ever ready to grant protection unto those that seek your protection. I have come to you soliciting your protection. I have no fault. Do you rescue me (from this situation).²⁰

Know that I shall always be devoted to you ! I am desirous of residing in any part, however repulsive, of your bodies. Indeed, I wish to reside in even your rectum !²¹ Ye sinless ones, I do not see that ye have any part in your bodies that may be regarded as repulsive, for ye are sacred, and sanctifying, and highly blessed ! Do ye, however, grant my prayer. Do ye tell me in which part of your bodies I shall take up my residence !—²²

“Bhishma continued,—Thus addressed by Cree, the kine, always auspicious and inclined to kindness unto all who are devoted to them, took counsel with one another, and then addressing Cree, said unto her, O king, these words.²³

“The kine said,—O thou of great fame, it is certainly desirable that we should honor thee ! Do thou live in our urine and dung. Both these are sacred, O auspicious goddess !—²⁴

“Cree said,—By good luck, ye have shown me much grace implying your desire to favour me. Let it be even as ye say ! Blessed be ye all, I have really been honored by you, ye givers of happiness !—²⁵

“Bhishma continued,—Having, O Bhārata, made this compact with kine, Cree, there and then, in the very sight of those kine, rendered herself invisible.²⁶ I have thus told thee, O son, the glory of the dung of kine. I shall once again discourse to thee of the glory of kine. Do thou listen to me !”²⁷

SECTION LXXXIII.

“Bhishma said,—They who make gifts of kine, and who subsist upon the remnants of things offered as libations on the sacred fire, are regarded, O Yudhishtira, as always performing sacrifices of every kind.¹ No sacrifice can be performed without the aid of curds and ghee. The very character as sacrifice which sacrifices have, depends upon ghee. Hence ghee (or, the cow from which it is produced) is regarded as the very root of sacrifice.² Of all kinds of gifts, the gift of kine is applauded as the highest. Kine are the foremost of all things. Themselves sacred, they are the best of cleansers and sanctifiers.³ People should cherish kine for obtaining prosperity and even

peace. The milk, curds, and ghee that kine yield are capable of cleansing one from every kind of sin.⁴ Kine are said to represent the highest energy both in this world and the world that is above. There is nothing that is more sacred or sanctifying than kine, O chief of Bharata's race.⁵ In this connection is recited the ancient narrative, O Yudhishtira, of the discourse between the Grandsire and the chief of the celestials.⁶ After the Daityas had been defeated and Cakra had become the lord of the three worlds, all creatures grew in prosperity and became devoted to the true religion.⁷ Then, on one occasion, the Rishis, the Gandharvas, the Kinnaras, the Uragas, the Rākshasas, the Deities, the Asuras, the winged creatures, and the Prajāpatis, O thou of Kuru's race, all assembled together and adored the Grandsire. There were Nārada and Parvata and Viṣvāvasu and Hāhā-Huhu,⁸⁻⁹ who sang in celestial strains for adoring that puissant lord of all creatures. The deity of wind bore thither the fragrance of celestial flowers.¹⁰ The Seasons also, in their embodied forms, bore the perfumes of flowers peculiar to each, unto that conclave of celestials, that gathering of all creatures of the universe,¹¹ where celestial maidens danced and sang in accompaniment with celestial music. In the midst of that assembly, Indra, saluting the Lord of all the deities and bowing his head unto him with reverence, asked him, saying,¹²—I desire, O Grandsire, to know why the region of kine is higher, O holy one, than the region of the deities themselves who are the lords of all the worlds.¹³ What austerities, what Brahmacharyya, O lord, did kine perform in consequence of which they are able to reside happily in a region that is even above that of the deities?¹⁴—Thus addressed by Indra, Brahman said unto the slayer of Vala,—Thou hast always, O slayer of Vala, disregarded kine.¹⁵ Hence, thou art not acquainted with the glorious pre-eminence of kine. Listen now to me, O puissant one, as I explain to thee the high energy and glorious pre-eminence of kine, O chief of the celestials!¹⁶ Kine have been said to be the limbs of sacrifice. They represent sacrifice itself, O Vāsava! Without them there can be no sacrifice.¹⁷ With their milk and the Havi produced therefrom, they uphold all creatures.¹⁸ Their male children are

engaged in assisting at tillage and thereby produce diverse kinds of paddy and other seeds.¹⁹ From them flow sacrifices and Havya and Kavya, and milk and curds and ghee. Hence, O chief of the deities, kine are sacred. Afflicted by hunger and thirst, they bear diverse burthens.²⁰ Kine support the Munis. They uphold all creatures by diverse acts. O Vāsava, kine are guileless in their behaviour. In consequence of such behaviour and of many well-performed acts, they are enabled to live always in regions that are even above ours.²¹ I have thus explained to thee today, O thou of a hundred sacrifices, the reason, O Cakra, of kine residing in a place that is high above that of the deities.²² Kine obtained many excellent forms, O Vāsava, and are themselves givers of boons (to others). They are called Surabhis. Of sacred deeds and endued with many auspicious indications, they are highly sanctifying.²³ Listen to me also, O slayer of Vala, as I tell thee in detail the reason why kine,—the children of Surabhi,—have descended on the Earth, O best of the deities.²⁴ In days of yore, O son, when in the Deva-yuga the high-souled Dānavas became lords of the three worlds, Aditi underwent the severest austerities and got Vishnu within her womb (as the reward thereof). Verily, O chief of the-celestials, she had stood upon one leg for many long years, desirous of having a son.^{*25-26} Beholding the great goddess Aditi thus undergoing the severest austerities, the daughter of Daksha, viz., the illustrious Surabhi,²⁷ herself devoted to righteousness, similarly underwent very severe austerities upon the breast of the delightful mountains of Kailāsa that are resorted to by both the deities and the Gandharvas.²⁸ Established on the highest Yoga, she also stood upon one leg for eleven thousand years.²⁹ The deities with the Rishis and the great Nāgas all became scorched with the severity of her penances. Repairing thither with me, all of them began to adore that auspicious goddess.³⁰ I then addressed that goddess endued with penances, and said,—O goddess, O thou of faultless conduct, for what purpose dost thou undergo such severe austerities?³¹ O highly blessed one, I am

* 'Devendreshu' is evidently a misreading for 'Daitendreshu.'—T.

gratified with thy penances, O beautiful one! Do thou, O goddess, solicit what boon thou desirest. I shall grant thee whatever thou mayst ask!—Even these were my words unto her, O Purandara.³² Thus addressed by me, Surabhi answered me, saying,—I have no need, O Grandsire, of boons. Even this, O sinless one, is a great boon to me that thou hast been gratified with me!³³—Unto the illustrious Surabhi, O chief of the celestials, who said so unto me, O lord of Cachi, I answered even in these words, O foremost of the deities, viz.,³⁴—O goddess, with this exhibition of thy freedom from cupidity and desire, and with these penances of thine, O thou of beautiful face, I have been exceedingly gratified. I, therefore, grant thee the boon of immortality.³⁵ Thou shalt dwell in a region that is higher than the three worlds, through my grace. That region shall be known to all by the name of Goloka.³⁶ Thy offspring, ever engaged in doing good acts, will reside in the world of men. In fact, O highly blessed one, thy daughters will reside there.³⁷ All kinds of enjoyment, celestial and human, that thou mayst think of will immediately be thine. Whatever happiness exists in Heaven, will also be thine, O blessed one!³⁸—The regions, O thou of a hundred eyes, that are Surabhi's are endued with means for the gratification of every wish. Neither Death, nor Decrepitude, nor fire, can overcome its denizens.³⁹ No ill-luck, O Vāsava, exists there. Many delightful woods, and delightful ornaments and objects of beauty may be seen there.⁴⁰ There many beautiful cars, all excellently equipt and which move at the will of the rider, may be seen, O Vāsava. O thou of eyes like lotus petals, it is only by Brahmacharyya, by penances, by Truth, by self-restraint, by gifts, by diverse kinds of righteous deeds, by sojourns to sacred waters, in fact, by severe austerities and righteous acts well-performed, that one can attain to Goloka.⁴¹⁻⁴² Thou hadst asked me, O Cakra, and I have answered thee in full. O slayer of Asuras, thou shouldst never disregard kine!—⁴³

“Bhishma continued,—‘Having heard these words of the self-born Brahman, O Yudhishtira, Cakra of a thousand eyes began from that time to worship kine every day and to show them the greatest respect.’⁴⁴ I have thus told thee everything

about the sanctifying character of kine, O thou of great splendour. The sacred and high pre-eminence and glory of kine,⁴⁵ that is capable of cleansing one from every sin, has, O chief of men, been thus explained to thee. That man who with senses withdrawn from every other object will recite this account unto Brāhmanas,⁴⁶ on occasions when Havya and Kavya are offered, or at sacrifices, or on occasions of adoring the Pitris, succeeds in conferring upon his ancestors an inexhaustible felicity fraught with the fruition of every wish.⁴⁷ That man who is devoted to kine succeeds in obtaining the fruition of every wish of his. Indeed, even those women that are devoted to kine succeed in obtaining the accomplishment of every wish of theirs.⁴⁸ He that desires sons obtains sons. He that desires daughters obtains daughters. He that desires wealth succeeds in acquiring wealth, and he that desires religious merit succeeds in winning religious merit.⁴⁹ He that desires knowledge acquires knowledge, and he that desires felicity succeeds in acquiring felicity. Indeed, O Bhārata, there is nothing that is unattainable to one that is devoted to kine.’”⁵⁰

SECTION LXXXIV.

“Yudhishtira said,—Thou hast, O grandsire, discoursed to me on the gift of kine that is fraught with great merit. In the case of kings observant of their duties, that gift is most meritorious.¹ Sovereignty is always painful. It is incapable of being borne by persons of uncleansed souls. In the generality of cases, kings fail to attain to auspicious ends.² By always making, however, gifts of earth, they succeed in cleansing themselves (of all their sins). Thou hast, O prince of Kuru’s race, discoursed to me on many duties.³ Thou hast discoursed to me on the gifts of kine made by king Nriga in days of old. The Rishi Nāchiketa, in ancient times, had discoursed on the merits of this act.⁴ The Vedas and the Upanishads also have laid down that in all sacrifices,—in fact, in all kinds of religious acts,—the Dakshinā should be earth or kine or gold.⁵ The Crutis, however, declare that of all Dakshinās, gold is very superior and is, indeed, the best. I desire, O grandsire,

to hear thee discourse truly on this topic.* What is gold? How did it spring up? When did it come into existence? What is its essence? Who is its presiding deity? What are its fruits? Why is it regarded as the foremost of all things? For what reason do men of wisdom applaud the gift of gold? For what reason is gold regarded as the best of Dakshinās in all sacrifices?⁸ Why also is gold regarded as a cleanser superior to earth itself and kine? Why, indeed, is it regarded so superior as a Dakshinā? Do thou, O grandsire, discourse to me on all this!⁹

“Bhishma said,—‘Listen, O king, with concentrated attention to me as I recite to thee in detail the circumstances connected with the origin of gold as understood by me.¹⁰ When my father Cāntanu of great energy departed from this world, I preceeded to Gangādwāra for performing his Crāddha.¹¹ Arrived there I commenced the Crāddha of my sire. My mother Jānhavi, coming there, rendered me great help.¹² Inviting many ascetics crowned with success and causing them to take their seats before me, I commenced the preliminary rites consisting of gifts of water and of other things.¹³ Having with a concentrated mind performed all preliminary rites as laid down in the scriptures, I set myself to duly offer the obsequial cake.¹⁴ I then saw, O king, that a handsome arm, adorned with Angadas and other ornaments, rose up, piercing the ground, through the blades of Kuṣa grass which I had spread.¹⁵ Beholding that arm rise from the ground, I became filled with wonder. Indeed, O chief of Bharata’s race, I thought that my sire had come himself for accepting the cake I was about to offer.¹⁶ Reflecting then, by the light of the scriptures, the conviction soon came upon me that the ordinance does occur in the Vedas that the cake should not be presented into the hand of him whose Crāddha is performed. Even this was the conviction that took possession of my mind, viz., that the obsequial cake should never be presented in this world by a man into the visible hand of the man whose obsequial rites are performed. The Pitris do not come in their visible forms for taking the cake. On the other hand, the ordinance provides that it should be presented on the blades

of Kuṣa grass spread on the earth for the purpose. I then, disregarding that hand which constituted an indication of my sire's presence,¹⁷⁻¹⁹ and recollecting the true ordinance depending upon the authority of the scriptures respecting the mode of presenting the cake, offered the entire cake, O chief of the Bharatas, upon those blades of Kuṣa grass that were spread before me.²⁰ Know, O prince of men, that what I did was perfectly consistent with the scriptural ordinance. After this, the arm of my sire, O monarch, vanished in our very sight.²¹ On that night as I slept, the Pitris appeared to me in a dream. Gratified with me they said, O chief of Bharata's race, even these words,—We have been pleased with thee,²² for the indication thou hast afforded today of thy adherence to the ordinance. It has pleased us to see that thou hast not swerved from the injunctions of the scriptures. The scriptural ordinance, having been followed by thee, has become more authoritative, O king.²³ By such conduct thou hast honored and maintained the authority of thyself, the scriptures, the auditions of the Vedas, the Pitris and the Rishis, the Grandsire Brahman himself, and those seniors, viz., the Prajāpatis. Adherence to the scriptures has been maintained. Thou hast today, O chief of the Bharatas, acted very properly.²⁴⁻²⁵ Thou hast made gifts of earth and kine. Do thou make gifts of gold. The gift of gold is very cleansing. O thou that art well-conversant with duties, know that by such acts of thine, both ourselves and our fore-fathers will all be cleansed of all our sins. Such gifts rescue both ancestors and descendants to the tenth degree of the person who makes them!—Even these were the words that my ancestors, appearing unto me in a dream, said unto me. I then awoke, O king, and become filled with wonder.²⁶⁻²⁸ Indeed, O chief of Bharata's race, I set my heart then upon making gifts of gold. Listen now, O monarch, to this old history.²⁹ It is highly praiseworthy and it extends the period of his life who listens to it. It was first recited to Rāma the son of Jamadagni. In former days Jamadagni's son Rāma, filled with great wrath,³⁰ exterminated the Kshatriyas from off the face of the Earth for thrice seven times. Having subjugated the entire Earth, the

heroic Rāma of eyes like lotus petals began to make preparations for performing a Horse-sacrifice, O king, that is praised by all Brāhmanas and Kshatriyas and that is capable of granting the fruition of every wish.³¹⁻³² That sacrifice cleanses all creatures and enhances the energy and splendour of those who succeed in performing it. Endued with great energy, Rāma, by the performance of that sacrifice, became sinless.³³ Having, however, performed that foremost of sacrifices, the high-souled Rāma failed yet to attain to perfect lightness of heart.³⁴ Repairing unto Rishis conversant with every branch of learning as also the deities, Rāma of Bhrigu's race questioned them. Filled with repentance and compassion, he addressed them, saying,—Ye highly blessed ones, do ye declare that which is more cleansing still for men engaged in fierce deeds?—Thus addressed by him, those great Rishis, fully acquainted with the Vedas and the scriptures, answered him, saying,³⁵⁻³⁶—O Rāma, guided by the authority of the Vedas, do thou honor all learned Brāhmanas. Following this conduct for sometime, do thou once more ask the regenerate Rishis as to what should be done by thee for cleansing thyself!³⁷ Follow the advice which those persons of great wisdom would give!—Repairing then to-*Vaṣishtha* and *Agastya* and *Kaṣyapa*,³⁸ that delighter of the Bhrigus, endued with great energy, asked them the very question.—Ye foremost of Brāhmanas, even this is the wish that has arisen in my heart. How, indeed, may I succeed in cleansing myself?³⁹ By what acts and rites may this be brought about? Or, if by gifts, what is that article by giving away which this wish of mine may be accomplished? Ye foremost of righteous persons, if your minds be inclined to do me a favour, then do tell me, ye that are endued with wealth of asceticism, what is that by which I may succeed in cleansing myself!—⁴⁰

“The Rishis said,—O delighter of the Bhrigus, the mortal that has sinned becomes cleansed by making gifts of kine, of earth, and of wealth. Even this is what we have heard.⁴¹ There is another gift that is regarded as a great cleanser. Listen to us, O regenerate Rishi, as we discourse on it! That article is excellent and is endued with wonderful aspect and is,

besides, the offspring of Fire.⁴³ In days of yore, the god Agni burnt all the world. It has been heard by us that from his seed sprung gold of bright complexion. It came to be celebrated under the name of the good-complexioned. By making gifts of gold thou art sure to have thy wish crowned with fruition.⁴⁴—Then the illustrious Vaciṣṭha in especial, of rigid vows, addressing him, said,—Hear, O Rāma, how gold, which has the splendour of fire, first sprang into existence.⁴⁵ That gold will confer merit on thee. In matters of gifts, gold is highly applauded. I shall also tell thee what is gold, whence it has come, and how it has come to be invested with superior attributes.⁴⁶ Listen to me, O thou of mighty arms, as I discourse upon these topics. Know this as certain that gold is of the essence of Fire and Soma.⁴⁷ The goat is Fire, (for if given, it leads to the region of the deity of fire); the sheep is Varuna (for it leads to the region of Varuna the lord of waters); the horse is Surya (for it leads to the region of Surya); elephants are Nāgas (for they lead to the world of Nāgas); buffalos are Asuras (for they lead to the region of Asuras);⁴⁸ Cocks and boars are Rākshasas (for they lead to the regions of the Rākshasas), O delighter of the Bhrigus; earth is sacrifice, kine, water, and Soma, (for it leads to the merits of sacrifice, and to the region of kine, of the lord of waters, and of Soma.) Even these are the declarations of the Smritis.⁴⁹ Churning the entire universe, a mass of energy was found. That energy is gold. Hence, O regenerate Rishi, compared to all these objects (which I have named above) gold is certainly superior. It is a precious thing, high and excellent.⁵⁰ It is for this reason that the deities and Gandharvas and Uragas and Rākshasas and human beings and Piçāchas hold it with care.⁵¹ All these beings, O son of Bhrigu's race, shine in splendour, with the aid of gold, after converting it into crowns and armlets and diverse kinds of ornaments.⁵² It is also for this reason that gold is regarded as the most cleansing of all cleansing things such as earth and kine and all other kinds

* The Commentator explains that hence, by making gifts of gold, one comes to be regarded as making gifts of the entire universe.—T.

of wealth, O prince of men.⁵³ The gift of gold, O puissant king, is the highest gift. It is distinguished above the gift of earth, of kine, and of all other things.⁵³ O thou that art endowed with the effulgence of an immortal, gold is an eternal cleanser. Do thou make gifts of it unto the foremost of Brāhmanas as it is the foremost of cleansing things.⁵⁴ Of all kinds of Dakshinā, gold is the best. They who make gifts of gold are said to be givers of all things.⁵⁵ Indeed, they who make gifts of gold come to be regarded as givers of deities. Agni is all the deities in one, and gold has Agni for its essence.⁵⁶ Hence it is that the person who makes gifts of gold gives away all the deities. Hence, O chief of men, there is no gift higher than the gift of gold.—⁵⁷

“Vaçishtha continued,—Hear once more, O regenerate Rishi, as I discourse upon it, the pre-eminence of gold, O foremost of all wielders of weapons.⁵⁸ I heard this formerly in the Purāna, O son of Bhrigu's race. It represents the speech of Prajāpati himself.⁵⁹ After the wedding was over of the illustrious and high-souled Rudra armed with the trident, O son of Bhrigu's race, with the goddess who became his spouse, on the breast of that foremost of mountains, viz., Himavat, the illustrious and high-souled deity wished to unite himself with the goddess. Thereupon all the deities, penetrated with anxiety, approached Rudra. Bending their heads with reverence and gratifying Mahādeva and his boon-giving spouse Umā, both of whom were seated together, they addressed Rudra, O perpetuator of Bhrigu's race, saying,—This union, O illustrious and sinless one, of thine with the goddess,⁶⁰⁻⁶² is a union of one endowed with penances with another of penances as severe ! Verily, it is the union, O lord, of one possessed of very great energy with another whose energy is scarcely less ! Thou, O illustrious one, art of energy that is irresistible. The goddess Umā also is possessed of energy that is equally irresistible.⁶³ The offspring that will result from a union like this, will, without doubt, O illustrious deity, be endowed with very great might. Verily, O puissant lord, that offspring will consume all things in the three worlds without leaving a remnant.⁶⁴ Do thou then, O lord of all the universe, O thou of large eyes,

grant unto these deities prostrated before thee, a boon from desire of benefiting the three worlds!⁶⁵ Do thou, O puissant one, restrain this high energy of thine which may become the seed of offspring.⁶⁶ Verily, that energy is the essence of all forces in the three worlds. Ye two, by an act of congress, are sure to scorch the universe!⁶⁷ The offspring that will be born of you two will certainly be able to afflict the deities! Neither the goddess Earth, nor the Firmament, nor Heaven, O puissant one,⁶⁸ nor all of them together, will be able to bear thy energy, we firmly believe. The entire universe is certain to be burnt through the force of thy energy.⁶⁹ It behooveth thee, O puissant one, to show us favor, O illustrious deity. That favor consists in thy not begetting a son, O foremost of the deities, upon the goddess Umā.⁷⁰ Do thou, with patience, restrain thy fiery and puissant energy!—Unto the deities that said so, the holy Mahādeva having the bovine bull for his sign, O regenerate Rishi, answered, saying,—So be it!—Having said so, the deity that has the bull for his vehicle, drew up his vital seed.⁷¹⁻⁷² From that time he came to be called by the name of *Urddharetas* (one that has drawn up the vital seed). The spouse of Rudra, however, at this endeavour of the deities to stop procreation, became highly incensed.⁷³ In consequence of her being of the opposite sex (and, therefore, endued with little control upon her temper) she used harsh words:—Since ye have opposed my lord in the matter of procreating an offspring when he was desirous of procreating one upon me,⁷⁴ as the consequence of this act, ye deities, ye all shall become sonless. Verily, since ye have opposed the birth of an offspring from me,⁷⁵ therefore, ye shall have no offspring of your own!—At the time this curse was denounced, O perpetuator of Bhṛigu's race, the deity of fire was not there.⁷⁶ It is in consequence of this curse of the goddess that the deities have become childless. Rudra, solicited by them, held in himself his energy of incomparable puissance.⁷⁷ A small quantity, however, that came out of his body fall down on the Earth. That seed, falling on the Earth, leaped into a blazing fire and there began to grow (in size and power) most wonderfully.⁷⁸ The energy of Rudra, coming in contact with another energy of great puis-

sance, became identified with it in respect of essence. Meanwhile, all the deities having Cakra at their head,⁷⁹ were scorched a good deal by the Asura named Tāraka. The Ādityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Māruts, the Aṇwins,⁸⁰ and the Sādhya all became exceedingly afflicted in consequence of the prowess of that son of Diti. All the regions of the deities, their beautiful cars, and their palatial mansions,⁸¹ and the retreats of the Rishis, were snatched away by the Asuras. Then the deities and the Rishis, with cheerless hearts, sought the protection of the illustrious and puissant Brahman of unfading glory.' ”—⁸²

SECTION LXXXV.

“—The Deities said,—The Asura named Tāraka who has received boons from thee, O puissant one, is afflicting the deities and the Rishis. Let his death be ordained by thee!¹ O Grandsire, great has been our fear from him. O illustrious one, do thou rescue us ! We have no other refuge than thee ?—”

“—Brahman said,—I am equal in my behaviour towards all creatures. I cannot, however, approve of unrighteousness. Let Tāraka, that opponent of the deities and Rishis, be quickly destroyed.² The Vedas and the eternal duties shall not be exterminated, ye foremost of celestials ! I have ordained what is proper, in this matter. Let the fever of your hearts be dispelled.—⁴

“—The Deities said,—In consequence of thy having granted him boons, that son of Diti has been proud of his might. He is incapable of being slain by the deities. How then will his death be brought about ?⁵ The boon which, O Grandsire, he has obtained from thee is that he should not be slayable by deities or Asuras or Rākshasas.⁶ The deities have also been cursed by the spouse of Rudra in consequence of their endeavour in former days to stop propagation. The curse denounced by her has been, O lord of the universe, even this, viz., that they are not to have any offspring !—”

“—Brahman said,—Ye foremost of deities, Agni was not there at the time the curse was denounced by the goddess.

Even he will beget an offspring for the destruction of the enemies of the gods.⁸ Transcending all the deities and Dānavas and Rākshasas and human beings and Gandharvas and Nāgas and feathery creatures,⁹ the offspring of Agni with his dart, which in his hands will be a weapon incapable of being baffled if once hurled at the foe, will destroy Tāraka from whom your fear hath arisen. Verily, all other enemies of yours will also be slain by him.¹⁰ Will is eternal. That Will is known by the name of Kāma and is identical with Rudra's seed a portion of which fell into the blazing form of Agni.¹¹ That energy, which is a mighty substance, and which resembles a second Agni, will be cast by Agni into Gangā for producing an offspring upon her in order to effect the destruction of the enemies of the gods.¹² Agni did not come within the range of Umā's curse. The eater of sacrificial libations was not present there when the curse was denounced.¹³ Let the deity of fire, therefore, be searched out. Let him now be set to this task. Ye sinless ones, I have told you what the means are for the destruction of Tāraka.¹⁴ The curses of those that are endued with energy fail to produce any effect upon those that are endued with energy. Forces, when they come into contact with something that is endued with stronger force, become weakened.¹⁵ They that are endued with penances are competent to destroy even the boon-giving deities who are indestructible. Will, or Like, or Desire (which is identifiable with Agni) sprang in former times and is the most eternal of all creatures.¹⁶ Agni is the Lord of the universe. He is incapable of being apprehended or described. Capable of going everywhere and existing in all things, he is the Creator of all beings. He lives in the hearts of all creatures. Endued with great puissance, He is older than Rudra himself.¹⁷ Let that eater of sacrificial libations, who is a mass of energy, be searched out. That illustrious deity will accomplish this desire of your hearts!¹⁸—Hearing these words of the Grandsire, the high-souled gods then proceeded to search out the god of fire with hearts cheerful in consequence of their purpose having been crowned with success.¹⁹ The gods and the Rishis then searched every part of the three worlds, their hearts filled with the thought of Agni and eagerly

desiring to obtain a sight of him.²⁰ Endued with penances, possessed of prosperity, celebrated over all the worlds, those high-souled ones, all crowned with ascetic success, sojourned over every part of the universe; O foremost one of Bhrigu's race.²¹ They failed, however, to find out the eater of sacrificial libations who had concealed himself by merging his self into self.* About this time, a frog, living in water, appeared on the surface thereof from the nethermost regions, with cheerless heart in consequence of having been scorched by the energy of Agni. The little creature addressed the deities who had become penetrated with fear and who were all very eager to obtain a sight of the deity of fire, saying,²²⁻²³—Ye gods, Agni is now residing in the nethermost regions. Scorched by the energy of that deity, and unable to bear it longer, I have come hither!²⁴ The illustrious bearer of sacrificial libations, ye gods, is now under the waters. He has created a mass of waters within which he is staying. All of us have been scorched by his energy.²⁵ If, ye gods, ye desire to obtain a sight of him,—verily, if ye have any business with him,—do ye go to him thither!²⁶ Do, indeed, repair thither. As regards ourselves, we shall fly from this place, ye deities, from fear of Agni!—Having said this much, the frog dived into the water.²⁷ The eater of sacrificial libations learnt the treachery of the frog. Coming to that animal, he cursed the whole race, saying,—Ye shall henceforth be deprived of the organ of taste!²⁸—Having denounced this curse on the frog, he left the spot speedily for taking up his abode elsewhere. Verily, the puissant deity did not show himself.²⁹ Seeing the plight to which the frogs were reduced for having done them a service, the deities, O best of the Bhrigus, showed favor unto those creatures. I shall tell thee everything regarding it. Do thou listen to me, O mighty-armed hero!—³⁰

“—The Deities said,—Though deprived of tongues through the curse of Agni and, therefore, reft of the sensation of taste, ye shall yet be able to utter diverse kinds of speech.³¹ Living within holes, deprived of food, reft of consciousness, wasted

* *I. e.*, into water for water is identical with Agoi.—T.

and dried up, and more dead than alive, the Earth will yet hold you all.³² Ye shall also be able to wander about at night-time when everything is enveloped in thick darkness!—Having said this unto the frogs, the deities once more went over every part of the Earth for finding out the deity of blazing flames. In spite of all their efforts, however, they failed to get at him.³³ Then, O perpetuator of Bhrigu's race, an elephant, as large and mighty as the elephant of Cakra, addressed the gods, saying,—Agni is now residing within this Aṣwattha tree!³⁴—Incensed with wrath, Agni cursed all the elephants, O descendant of Bhrigu, saying,—Your tongues will be bent back!³⁵—Having been pointed out by the elephants, the deity of fire cursed all elephants even thus and then went away and entered the heart of the Cami tree from desire of residing within it for sometime.³⁶ Listen now, O puissant hero, what favor was shown unto the elephants, O foremost one of Bhrigu's race, by the deities of un baffled prowess who were all gratified with the service a representative of theirs had done to them.—³⁷

“—The Deities said,—With the aid of even your tongues bent inwards ye shall be able to eat all things, and with even those tongues ye shall be able to utter cries that will only be indistinct!³⁸—Having blessed the elephants in this way, the denizens of Heaven once more resumed their search after Agni. Indeed, having issued out of the Aṣwattha tree, the deity of fire had entered the heart of Cami.³⁹ This new abode of Agni was divulged by a parrot. The gods thereupon proceeded to the spot. Enraged with the conduct of the parrot, the deity of blazing flames cursed the whole parrot race, saying,—Ye shall from this day be deprived of the power of speech!⁴⁰—Indeed, the eater of sacrificial libations turned up the tongues of all the parrots. Beholding Agni at the place pointed out by the parrot, and witnessing the curse denounced upon him, the gods, feeling a compassion for the poor creature, blessed him, saying,⁴¹—In consequence of thy being a parrot, thou shalt not be wholly deprived of the power of speech. Though thy tongue has been turned backwards, yet speech thou shalt have, confined to the letter K.⁴² Like that of a child or an

old man, thy speech shall be sweet and indistinct and wonderful!—Having said these words unto the parrot, and beholding the deity of fire within the heart of the Cami, the gods⁴³ made Cami wood a sacred fuel fit for producing fire in all religious rites. It was from that time that fire is seen to reside in the heart of the Cami.⁴⁴ Men came to regard the Cami as a proper means for producing fire (in sacrifices).^{*} The waters that occur in the nethermost regions had come into contact with the deity of blazing flames.⁴⁵ Those heated waters, O thou of Bhrigu's race, are vomited forth by the mountain springs. In consequence, indeed, of Agni having resided in them for sometime, they became hot through his energy.⁴⁶ Meanwhile Agni, beholding the gods, became grieved. Addressing the deities, he asked them,—What is the reason of your presence here?⁴⁷—Unto him the deities and the great Rishis said,—We wish to set thee to a particular task. It behooveth thee to accomplish it!⁴⁸ When accomplished, it will redound greatly to thy credit!⁴⁹

“—Agni said,—Tell me what your business is. I shall, ye gods, accomplish it! I am always willing to be set by you to any task you wish! Do not scruple, therefore, to command me!⁵⁰

“—The Deities said,—There is an Asura of the name of Tāraka who has been filled with pride in consequence of the boon he has obtained from Brahman. Through his energy he is able to oppose and discomfit us. Do thou ordain his destruction!⁵¹ O sire, do thou rescue these deities, these Prajāpatis, and these Rishis, O highly blessed Pāvaka!⁵² O puissant one, do thou beget a heroic son possessed of thy energy, who will dispel, O bearer of sacrificial libations, our fears from that Asura!⁵³ We have been cursed by the great goddess Umā. There is nothing else than thy energy which can be our refuge now. Do thou, therefore, O puissant deity, rescue us all!⁵⁴—Thus addressed, the illustrious and irresistible bearer of sacrificial

* This refers to the practice of making the sacrificial fire by rubbing two sticks of Cami. It is a very inflammable wood and is used hence in all sacred rites.—T.

libations answered, saying,—Be it so !—and he then proceeded towards Gangā otherwise called Bhāgīrathi.⁵⁵ He united himself in (spiritual) congress with her and caused her to conceive. Verily, in the womb of Gangā the seed of Agni began to grow even as Agni himself grows (when supplied with fuel and aided by the wind).⁵⁶ With the energy of that god, Gangā became exceedingly agitated at heart. Indeed, she suffered great distress and became unable to bear it.⁵⁷ When the deity of blazing flames cast his seed endued with great energy into the womb of Gangā, a certain Asura (bent on purposes of his own) uttered a frightful roar.⁵⁸ In consequence of that frightful roar uttered by the Asura for purposes of his own (and not for terrifying her), Gangā became very much terrified and her eyes rolled in fear and betrayed her agitation.⁵⁹ Deprived of consciousness, she became unable to bear her body and the seed within her womb. The daughter of Janhu, inseminated with the energy of the illustrious deity, began to tremble.⁶⁰ Overwhelmed with the energy of the seed she held in her womb, O learned Brāhmana, she then addressed the deity of blazing fire, saying,—I am no longer capable, O illustrious one, of bearing thy seed in my womb.⁶¹ Verily, I am overcome with weakness by this seed of thine. The health I had in days before is no longer mine. I have been exceedingly agitated, O illustrious one, and my heart is dead within me, O sinless one.⁶² O foremost of all persons endued with penances, I am incapable of bearing thy seed any longer. I shall cast it off, induced by the distress that has overtaken me, and not by caprice.⁶³ There has been no actual contact of my person with thy seed, O illustrious deity of blazing flames! Our union, having for its cause the distress that has overtaken the deities, has been subtle and not of the flesh, O thou of great splendour.⁶⁴ Whatever merit or otherwise there may be in this act (intended to be done by me), O eater of sacrificial libations, must belong to thee. Verily, I think, the righteousness or unrighteousness of this deed must be thine !⁶⁵—Unto her the deity of fire said,—Do thou bear the seed! Do, indeed, bear the foetus endued with my energy. It will lead to great results.⁶⁶ Thou art, verily, capable of bearing the entire

Earth. Thou wilt gain nothing by not holding this energy.⁶⁷—That foremost of streams, though thus dissuaded by the deity of fire as also by all the other deities, cast off the seed on the breast of Meru, that foremost of all mountains.⁶⁸ Capable (somehow) of bearing that seed, yet oppressed by the energy of Rudra (for Agni is identical with Rudra), she failed to hold that seed longer in consequence of its burning energy.⁶⁹ After she had cast it off, through sheer distress, that blazing seed having the splendour of fire, O perpetuator of Bhrigu's race, Agni saw her,⁷⁰ and asked that foremost of streams,—Is it all right with the foetus thou hast cast off? Of what complexion has it been, O goddess? Of what form does it look? With what energy does it seem to be endued? Do thou tell me all about it!—⁷¹

“—Gangā said,—The foetus is endued with the complexion of gold. In energy it is even like thee, O sinless one! Of an excellent complexion, perfectly stainless, and blazing with splendour, it has illuminated the entire mountain.⁷² O foremost of all persons endued with penances, the fragrance emitted by it resembles the cool perfume that is scattered by lakes adorned with lotuses and *Nymphæa stellata*, mixed with that of the *Nauclea Cadamba*.⁷³ With the splendour of that foetus everything around it seemed to be transformed into gold even as all things on mountain and low land seem to be transformed into gold by the rays of the Sun.⁷⁴ Indeed, the splendour of that foetus, spreading far, falls upon mountains and rivers and springs.⁷⁵ Indeed, it seems that the three worlds, with all their mobile and immobile creatures, are being illuminated by it. Even of this kind is thy child, O illustrious bearer of sacrificial libations.⁷⁶ Like unto Surya or thy blazing self, in beauty it is even like a second Soma!—Having said these words, the goddess disappeared there and then.⁷⁷ Pāvaka also, of great energy, having accomplished the business of the deities proceeded to the place he liked, O delighter of the Bhrigus.⁷⁸ It was in consequence of the result of this act that the Rishis and the deities bestowed the name of *Hiranyaretas* upon the deity of fire.^{*79} And because the Earth held that seed (after

* ‘*Hiranyaretas*’ implies ‘having gold for his vital seed.—T.

the goddess Gangā had cast it upon her), she also came to be called by the name of Vasumati. Meanwhile, that foetus, which had sprung from Pāvaka and been held for a time by Gangā,^{*80} having fallen on a forest of reeds, began to grow and at last assumed a wonderful form. The presiding goddess of the constellation Krittikā beheld that form resembling the rising Sun.⁸¹ She thenceforth began to rear that child as her son with the sustenance of her breast. For this reason that child of pre-eminent splendour came to be called Kārtikeya after her name.⁸² And because he grew from seed that fell out of Rudra's body, he came to be called Skanda. The incident also of his birth having taken place in the solitude of a forest of reeds, concealed from everybody's view, led to his being called by the name of Guha. It was in this way that gold came into existence as the offspring of the deity of blazing flames.†⁸³ Hence it is that gold came to be looked upon as the foremost of all things and the ornament of the very gods. It was from this circumstance that gold came to be called by the name of Jātarupam.‡⁸⁴ It is the foremost of all costly things, and among ornaments also it is the foremost. The cleanser among all cleansing things, it is the most auspicious of all auspicious objects.⁸⁵ Gold is truly the illustrious Agni, the Lord of all things, and the foremost of all Prajāpatīs. The most sacred of all sacred things is gold, O foremost of regenerate ones. Verily, gold is said to have for its essence Agni and Soma!—⁸⁶

"Vācishtha continued,—This history also, O Rāma, called Brahma-darçana, was heard by me in days of yore, respecting the achievement of the Grandsire Brahman who is identifiable with the Supreme Soul.⁸⁷ To a sacrifice performed in days of yore by that foremost of gods, viz., the Lord Rudra, O thou of

* 'Vasumati' implies 'endued with wealth,' so called because the seed of Agni, identified with gold, is wealth of the highest kind and fell on the Earth who from that time began to hold it.—T.

† 'Skanda' is derived from 'Skanna' or fallen out. 'Guha' implies secret. The secrecy of his birth in the wilderness led to the bestowal of this name. He has many other names.—T.

‡ 'Jātarupa' refers to the incident of its having assumed an excellent form after its birth from Agni.—T.

great might, who on that occasion had assumed the form of Varuna,⁸⁸ there came the Munis and all the deities with Agni at their head. To that sacrifice also came all the sacrificial limbs (in their embodied forms), and the Mantra called Vashat in his embodied form.⁸⁹ All the Sāmāns also and all the Yajushes, numbering by thousands and in their embodied forms, came there. The Rig-Veda also came there, adorned with the rules of orthoepy.⁹⁰ The Lakshanas, the Suras, the Tomas, the Niruktas, the Notes arranged in rows, and the syllable Om, as also Nigraha and Pragaha, all came there and took their residence in the eye of Mahādeva.⁹¹ The Vedas with the Upanishats, Vidyā and Sāvitri, as also, the Past, the Present, and the Future, all came there and were held by the illustrious Civa.⁹² The puissant Lord of All then poured libations himself into his own self. Indeed, the wielder of Pināka caused that Sacrifice of multifarious form to look exceedingly beautiful.⁹³ He is Heaven, Firmament, Earth, and the Welkin. He is called the Lord of the Earth. He is the Lord whose sway is owned by all obstacles. He is endued with Cree and He is identical with the deity of blazing flames.⁹⁴ That illustrious deity is called by various names. Even He is Brahman and Civa and Rudra and Varuna and Agni and Prajāpati. He is the auspicious Lord of all creatures.⁹⁵ Sacrifice (in his embodied form), and Penance, and all the union rites, and the goddess Dikshā blazing with rigid observances, the several Points of the compass with the deities that respectively preside over them, the spouses of all the deities, their daughters, and the celestial mothers, all came to Paçupati, O perpetuator of Bhrigu's race, together in a body.⁹⁶⁻⁹⁷ Verily, beholding that sacrifice of the high-souled Mahādeva who had assumed the form of Varuna, all of them became highly pleased. Seeing the celestial damsels of great beauty, the seed of Brahman came out and fell upon the Earth.⁹⁸ In consequence of the seed having fallen on the dust, Pushan (Surya) took up that dust mixed with the particles of seed from the Earth with his hands and cast it into the sacrificial fire.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, the sacrifice with the sacred fire of blazing flames was commenced and it went on. Brahman (as the Hotri) was pouring libations

on the fire. While thus employed, the Grandsire became excited with desire (and his seed came out).¹⁰⁰ As soon as that seed came out, he took it up with the sacrificial ladle and poured it as a libation of ghee, O delighter of the Bhrigus, with the necessary Mantras, on the blazing fire.¹⁰¹ From that seed, Brahman of great energy caused the four orders of creatures to spring into existence. That seed of the Grandsire was endued with the three attributes of Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas. From that element in it which represented the principle of Rajas, sprang all mobile creatures endued with the principle of Pravritti or action.*¹⁰² From the element of Tamas in it, sprang all immobile creatures. The principle of Sattwa, however, which dwelt in that seed, entered both kinds of existences. That attribute of Sattwa is of the nature of Tejas or Light (being identical with Buddhi or the Understanding). It is eternal and of it is unending Space.†¹⁰³ In all creatures the attribute of Sattwa is present and is identical with that light which shows what is right and what is wrong. When the seed of Brahman was thus poured as a libation on that sacrificial fire, there sprang from it, O mighty one, three beings into existence.¹⁰⁴ They were three male persons, endued with bodies that partook of the characters of the circumstances from which they respectively sprang. One arose first from the flames of the fire (called Bhrik) and hence he came to be called by the name of Bhrigu. A second came from the burning charcoals (called Angāra) and hence he came to be called by the name of Angiras.¹⁰⁵ The third sprang from a heap of extinguished char-coals and he came to be called by the name of Kavi. It has been already said that the first came out with flames emanating from his body and hence he was called Bhrigu.¹⁰⁶ From the rays of the sacrificial fire sprang another called Marichi. From Marichi (afterwards) sprang Kaçyapa.

* The Commentator explains,—‘Pravrittīpradhānam jaṅgamama-bhūt.’—T.

† ‘Sa guṇa’ refers to Sattwa. Tejas is identical with Buddhi, because Buddhi, like Light, discovers all things. Sattwa, again, being of the nature of space, or rather being space itself, is of universal form; that is, Sattwa is all-pervading.—T.

It has been already said that from the (burning) char-coals sprang Angiras. The (diminutive) Rishis called Vālikhillyas sprang from the blades of Kuṣa grass spread out in that sacrifice.¹⁰⁷ From the same blades of Kuṣa grass, O thou of great puissance, sprang Atri. From the ashes of the fire sprang all those that are numbered among the regenerate Rishis,¹⁰⁸ viz., the Vaikhānashas, endued with penances and devoted to Vedic lore and all excellent accomplishments.¹⁰⁹ From the eyes of Agni sprang the twin Aṣvins endued with great beauty of person. At last, from his ears, sprang all the Prajāpatis.¹¹⁰ The Rishis sprang from the pores of Agni's body. From his sweat sprang Cchandas, and from his strength sprang Mind. For this reason Agni has been said to be all the deities in his individual self,¹¹¹ by Rishis endued with Vedic lore, guided by the authority of the Vedas. The pieces of wood that keep alive the flames of Agni are regarded as the Months. The juices the fuel yields constitute the Fortnights.¹¹² The liver of Agni is called the Day and Night, and his fierce light is called the Muhurtas. The blood of Agni is regarded as the source of the Rudras. From his blood sprang also the gold-complexioned deities called the Maitradevatās.¹¹³ From his smoke sprang the Vasus. From his flames sprang the Rudras as also the (twelve) Ādityas of great effulgence.¹¹⁴ The Planets and Constellations and other stars that have been set in their respective orbits in the firmament, are regarded as the (burning) char-coals of Agni. The first Creator of the universe declared Agni to be Supreme Brahma and Eternal,¹¹⁵ and the giver of all wishes. This is verily a mystery.

“—After all these births had taken place, Mahādeva who had assumed the form of Varuna (for his sacrifice) and who had Pavana for his soul,¹¹⁶ said,—This excellent Sacrifice is mine. I am the Grahapati in it. The three beings that first sprang from the sacrificial fire are mine! Without doubt, they should be regarded as my offspring. Know this, ye gods who range through the skies! They are the fruits of this Sacrifice!¹¹⁷

“—Agni said,—These offspring have sprung from my limbs. They have all depended upon me as the cause of their starting into life. They should, therefore, be regarded, as my

children. Mahādeva in the form of Varuna is in error in respect of this matter.*¹¹⁸—After this, the Master of all the worlds, the Grandsire of all creatures, viz., Brahman, then said,—These children are mine ! The seed was mine which I poured upon the sacrificial fire.¹¹⁹ I am the accomplisher of this Sacrifice. It was I who poured on the sacrificial fire the seed that came out of myself. The fruit is always his who has planted the seed. The principal cause of these births is the seed owned by me !¹²⁰—The deities then repaired to the presence of the Grandsire and having bowed their heads unto him and joined their hands in reverence, they said unto him,¹²¹—All of us, O illustrious one, and the entire universe of mobile and immobile creatures, are thy offspring. O sire, let Agni of blazing flames,¹²² and the illustrious and puissant Mahādeva who has, for this sacrifice, assumed the form of Varuna, have their wish (in the matter of the offspring) !—At these words, although born of Brahman, the puissant Mahādeva in the form of Varuna, the ruler of all aquatic creatures¹²³ received the first-born one, viz., Bhrigu endued with the effulgence of the Sun as his own child. The Grandsire then intended that Angiras should become the son of Agni.¹²⁴ Conversant with the truth in respect of everything, the Grandsire then took Kavi as his own son. Engaged in procreating creatures for peopling the Earth, Bhrigu who is regarded as a Prajāpati thence came to be called as Varuna's offspring.¹²⁵ Endued with every prosperity, Angiras came to be called as the offspring of Agni, and the celebrated Kavi came to be known as the child of Brahman himself. Bhrigu and Angiras, who had sprung from the flame and the char-coals of Agni respectively, became the procreators of extensive races and tribes in the world.¹²⁶ Verily, these three, viz., Bhrigu and Angiras and Kavi, regarded as Prajāpati, are the progenitors of many races and tribes. All are the children of these three. Know this, O puissant hero.¹²⁷ Bhrigu begat seven sons all of whom became equal to him in merits and accomplishments. Their names are Chyavana, Vajracirshan, Suchi, Urva,¹²⁸ Cukra, that giver of boons, Vibhu

* 'Avaçātṃaka' is explained by the Commentator as 'bhrānta.'—T.

and Savana. These are the seven. They are children of Bhrigu and are hence Bhārgavas. They are also called Vārūnas in consequence of their ancestor Bhrigu having been adopted by Mahādeva in the form of Varuna. Thou belongest to the race of Bhrigu.¹²⁹ Angiras begot eight sons. They also are known as Varūnas. Their names are Vrihaspati, Utatthya, Payasya, Cānti,¹³⁰ Dhira, Virupa, Samvarta, and Sudhanwan the eighth. These eight are regarded also as the offspring of Agni. Freed from every evil, they are devoted to knowledge only.¹³¹ The sons of Kavi who was appropriated by Brahman himself are also known as Vārūnas. Numbering eight, all of them became progenitors of races and tribes (instead of betaking themselves to celebrate lives). Auspicious by nature, they are all conversant with Brahma.¹³² The names of the eight sons of Kavi are Kavi, Kāvya, Dhrishnu, Uçanas endued with great intelligence, Bhrigu, Viraja, Kāçi, and Ugra conversant with every duty.¹³³ These are the eight sons of Kavi. By them the whole world has been peopled. They are all Prajāpatis, and by them have been procreated many offspring.¹³⁴ Thus, O chief of Bhrigu's race, hath the whole world been peopled with the progeny of Angiras, and Kavi and Bhrigu.¹³⁵ The puissant and supreme Lord Mahādeva in the form of Varuna which he had assumed for his sacrifice had first, O learned Brāhmana, adopted both Kavi and Angiras. Hence, these two are regarded as of Varuna.¹³⁶ After that the eater of sacrificial libations, viz., the deity of blazing flames, adopted Angiras. Hence, all the progeny of Angiras are known as belonging to the race of Agni.¹³⁷ The Grandsire Brahman was, in olden days, gratified by all the deities who said unto him,—Let these lords of the universe (referring to Bhrigu and Angiras and Kavi and their descendants) rescue us all.¹³⁸ Let all of them become progenitors of offspring (for peopling the Earth). Let all of them become endued with penances. Through thy grace, let all these rescue the world (from becoming an uninhabited wilderness).¹³⁹ Let them become procreators and extenders of races and tribes and let them increase thy energy. Let all of them become thorough masters of the Vedas and let them be achievers of great deeds.¹⁴⁰ Let all of them be friends

to the cause of the deities. Indeed, let all of them become endued with auspiciousness. Let them become founders of extensive races and tribes and let them be great Rishis. Let all of them be endued with high penances and let all of them be devoted to high Brahmacharyya.¹⁴¹ All of us, as also all these, are thy offspring, O thou of great puissance. Thou, O Grandsire, art the Creator of both of deities and the Brahmanas.¹⁴² Marichi is thy first offspring. All these also that are called Bhārgavas are thy progeny. (Ourselves also are so). Looking at this fact, O Grandaire, we shall all aid and support one another.¹⁴³ All these shall, in this way, multiply their progeny and establish thyself at the commencement of each creation after the universal destruction.¹⁴⁴—Thus addressed by them, Brahman, the Grandsire of all the worlds, said unto them,—So be it! I am gratified with you all!—Having said so unto the deities, he proceeded to the place he had come from.¹⁴⁵ Even this is what happened in days of old in that sacrifice of the high-souled Mahādeva, that foremost one of all the deities, in the beginning of creation, when he for the purposes of his sacrifice had assumed the form of Varuna.¹⁴⁶ Agni is Brahman. He is Paçupati. He is Sarva. He is Rudra. He is Prajāpati.* It is well known that gold is the offspring of Agni.¹⁴⁷ When fire is not obtainable (for the purposes of a sacrifice), gold is used as a substitute. Guided by the indications afforded by the auditions of the Veda, one that is conversant with authorities and that knows the identity of gold with fire, acts in this way.¹⁴⁸ Placing a piece of gold on some blades of Kuça grass spread out on the ground, the sacrificer pours libations upon it. Upon also the pores of an anthill, upon the right ear of a goat,¹⁴⁹ upon a piece of level earth, upon the waters of a Tirtha, or on the hand of a Brāhmana, if libations are poured, the illustrious deity of fire becomes gratified and regards it as a source of his own aggrandisement as also that of the deities through his.¹⁵⁰ Hence, it is that we have heard that all the deities regard Agni as their refuge and are devoted to him. Agni sprang from Brahman, and from

* These are different names of Brahman and Mahādeva.—T.

Agni sprang gold.*¹⁵¹ Hence, it has been heard by us, that those persons observant of righteousness that make gifts of gold are regarded as giving away all the deities.¹⁵² The man who makes gifts of gold attains to a very high end. Regions of blazing effulgence are his. Verily, O Bhārgava, he becomes installed as the king of kings in Heaven.¹⁵³ That person who, at sun-rise, makes a gift of gold according to the ordinance and with proper Mantras, succeeds in warding off the evil consequences foreshadowed by ominous dreams.¹⁵⁴ The man who, as soon as the Sun has risen, makes a gift of gold becomes cleansed of all his sins. He who makes a gift of gold at mid-day destroys all his future sins.¹⁵⁵ He who, with restrained soul, makes a gift of gold at the second twilight succeeds in attaining to a residence with Brahman and the deity of wind and Agni and Soma in their respective regions.¹⁵⁶ Such a man attains to auspicious fame in regions of great felicity that belong to Indra himself. Attaining to great fame in this world also, and cleansed of all his sins, he sports in joy and happiness.¹⁵⁷ Verily, such a man attains to many other regions of happiness and becomes unequalled for glory and fame. His course perfectly unobstructed, he succeeds in going everywhere at will.¹⁵⁸ He has never to fall down from the regions to which he attains, and the glory he acquires becomes very great. Indeed, by making gifts of gold one attains to innumerable regions of felicity all of which he enjoys for eternity.¹⁵⁹ That man who, having ignited a fire at sunrise, makes gifts of gold in view of the observance of a particular vow, succeeds in attaining to the fruition of all his wishes.¹⁶⁰ It has been said that gold is identical with Agni. The gift of gold, therefore, is productive of great felicity. The gift of gold leads to the possession of those merits and accomplishments that are desired, and cleanses the heart.†¹⁶¹ I have thus told thee, O sinless one, the origin of gold. O thou of puissance, know how Kār-

* The 'hence' here does not refer to what precedes immediately, but has reference to what has been said of the identity of Agni with Brahman and Rudra.—T.

† 'Pravarttakam' implies 'leading to Pravritti/for righteous acts' or ai.—T.

tikeya grew up, O delighter of Bhṛigu's race.¹⁶² After a long time Kārtikeya grew up. He was then, O perpetuator of Bhṛigu's race, chosen by all the deities with Indra at their head, as the generalissimo of the celestial forces.¹⁶³ He slew the Daitya Tāraka as also many other Asuras, at the command of the chief of the celestials, O Brāhmana, and actuated also by the desire of benefiting all the worlds.¹⁶⁴ I have also, O thou of great might, discoursed to thee on the merits of making gifts of gold. Do thou, therefore, O foremost of all speakers, make gifts of gold.'—¹⁶⁵

"Bhishma continued,—'Thus addressed by Vāciṣṭha, Jambū-dagni's son of great prowess then made gifts of gold unto the Brāhmanas and became cleansed of his sins.¹⁶⁶ I have thus told thee, O king, everything about the merits of the gifts of gold and about its origin also, O Yudhishtira!¹⁶⁷ Do thou also, therefore, make abundant gifts of gold unto the Brāhmanas. Verily, O king, by making such gifts of gold, thou wilt surely be cleansed of all thy sins!'—"¹⁶⁸

SECTION LXXXVI.

"Yudhishtira said,—'Thou hast, O grandsire, discoursed to me, in detail, on the merits that attach to the gift of gold agreeably to the ordinances laid down in the scriptures and as indicated in the auditions of the Veda.¹ Thou hast also narrated what the origin is of gold. Do thou tell me now how Tāraka met with destruction.² Thou hast said, O king, that that Asura had become unslayable by the gods. Do thou tell me in detail how his destruction was brought about.³ O perpetuator of Kuru's race, I desire to hear this from thee, I mean the details of Tāraka's slaughter. Great is my curiosity to hear the narrative.'⁴

"Bhishma said,—'The gods and the Rishis, O monarch, reduced to great distress (by Tāraka's prowess and the conduct of Gangā in casting off Agni's seed), urged the six Krittikās to rear that child.⁵ Amongst the celestial ladies there were none, save these, that could, by their energy, bear the seed of Agni in their wombs.⁶ The god of fire became exceedingly

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